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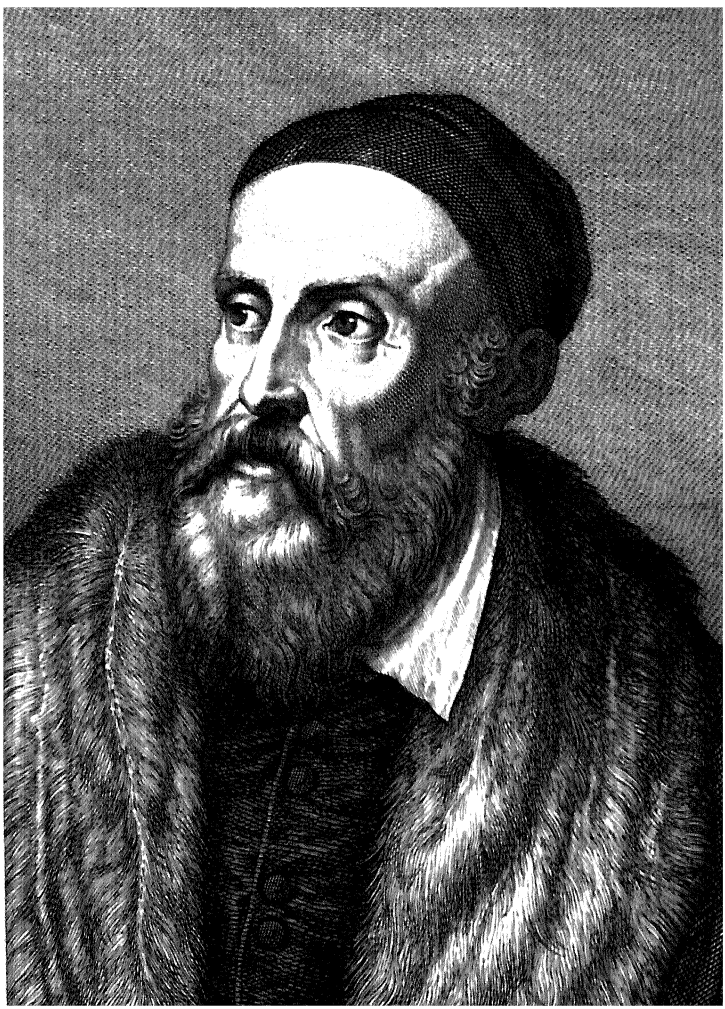
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TITIAN:

HIS LIFE AND TIMES.



Titian

THE

LIFE AND TIMES

OF

TITIAN.

WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF HIS FAMILY.

BY J. A. CROWE AND G. B. CAVALCASELLE.

AUTHORS OF THE "HISTORY OF PAINTING IN NORTH ITALY."

IN TWO VOLUMES.—VOL. I.

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WITH PORTRAIT AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

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1881.

TO

His Imperial and Royal Highness,

THE CROWN PRINCE OF GERMANY
AND PRUSSIA,

IN TESTIMONY OF ADMIRATION FOR HIS EFFORTS IN PROMOTING
AND PROTECTING THE STUDY OF THE ARTS,

THESE VOLUMES

ARE RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED BY

THE AUTHORS.

PREFACE.

THE materials for Titian's Life and Times are not to be found in a condensed or easily accessible form, nor are they to be collected otherwise than by patient search and laborious reading. In the contemporary "Dialogues" of Dolce, Pino, and Biondo, we are treated more frequently to anecdote than to fact, and the letters of Aretino which illustrate the period extending from 1527 to 1556 require to be sifted and controlled with the more care as they were often altered and interpolated to serve a political purpose. Vasari's biography, written ten years before Titian's death, is necessarily curt and incomplete, but it is feebly supplemented by Sansovino, whilst Borghini's "Riposo" and Tizianello's "Anonimo," printed in 1584 and 1622, are altogether sketchy and imperfect. Ridolfi, the first to attempt a finished life of Titian, had ample sources of information at his command, but he used them superficially, and his account of the great master is as short as it is slight and diffuse. Early in the present century Dr. Taddeo Jacobi, a

descendant of the Vecelli, began collecting matter for a history of his ancestors at Cadore, and in the course of years he brought together a fair number of documents of interest. Dr. Jacobi unfortunately was unable to weave his records into a literary shape, and he found himself obliged to transfer his treasures to other hands. But Stefano Ticozzi, to whom he entrusted his MS., laboured under the serious disadvantage of being ignorant of art and unacquainted with pictures, and the book which he published in 1817, though it has never been superseded, was so shallow and redundant in style, that it only served to call forth the satire of Andrea Maier, who wrote the "Imitazione Pittorica" to chastise and expose Ticozzi's ignorance and presumption.

The field which Dr. Jacobi surveyed at Cadore had yielded so large a harvest that it encouraged search in other quarters. Abate Cadorin, Jacobi's friend and contemporary, undertook to do for Venice what had already been done for Titian's birth-place, and the result was the publication of a work often quoted in these pages, in which copious illustrations are given of the great artist's home in the Alps and lagoons. The whole of the facts thus gathered up were condensed by Francesco Beltrame into a quarto of ninety-eight pages published in 1853 under the title of "Tiziano Vecellio e il suo monumento."

Titian's fame was not confined even in his own time to Italy. He was not more appreciated in Venice than in Spain, France, or Germany. Yet if we look into the pictorial annals of these countries it is surprising how little we gain by the study of them. Spain is perhaps more fruitful in early notices than any other State, but the works of Cean Bermudez and his successors contain little more than is derived from Italian sources; and the most abundant spring of information is the modern catalogue of the Madrid Museum by Don Pedro de Madrazo, in which documentary evidence of an important kind is made public in a short and useful form. In Germany the unwieldy *folios* of Sandrart, in France the lighter volumes of Felibien, add nothing to our store. Rio's "Art Chrétien" contains little more than a long and virulent attack on Titian as a painter who mainly contributed to the decay of religious tradition in art.

In England, as early as 1829, Sir Abraham Hume condensed the narrative of Ridolfi into a volume, to which he added lists of pictures and engravings, which are still useful, whilst Northcote, in 1830, tried to supersede Hume by pirating Ticozzi. But the barrenness of English research has in some measure been retrieved by the delightful work of Mr. Josiah Gilbert, whose bright pictures of the Cadorine country are not

less charming than his insight into Titian's feeling for the scenery of the Dolomitic Alps.

In the Netherlands, strong light was recently thrown on an interesting period of Titian's career by the publication of inventories and correspondence of Charles the Fifth and Mary of Hungary, under the direction of Mr. Gachard and Mr. Alexandre Pinchart.

Within the last half century, laudable efforts had been made to exhume the records of Titian which lay concealed in the archives of Italy. Pungileoni edited some pieces which he found at Mantua, Morelli in MS. notes to the "Anonimi" of Zen and Tizianello, disinterred a vast amount of matter and extracted with care the interminable diaries of Sanuto. Ciani wrote the history of the Cadorine people. Elze, Heyd, and Thomas told of the rise and fall of the Fondaco de' Tedeschi. But the most important contributions to the literature of Venetian art of late years have been Lorenzi's "Monumenti," elucidating the progress and completion of the Ducal Palace at Venice, Campori's essays and correspondence on the relations of Titian to the Court of Ferrara, and Ronchini's statement of the connection of the same master with the Princes of the House of Farnese.

All the materials brought together by Dr. Jacobi, with additions made by Giuseppe Ciani, have been kindly placed at our disposal by their present possessor,

Antonio da Via, curate of Pieve di Cadore. Canon Braghirolli opened to us the correspondence of Titian with the Marquises and Dukes of Gonzaga; and by the kindness of Don Francisco Diaz, Simancas has yielded its treasures in the shape of countless letters exchanged between Titian, Charles the Fifth, Philip the Second, and their ministers. To these unusual sources of information, for the communication of which we desire here to express our most grateful thanks, we have to add the fruit of our own study and travel, upon which it is only necessary to dwell for the purpose of saying—that the pictures to which the name of Titian is attached exceed the number of one thousand, in Italy, in England, and on the continent; and that we have been at pains to visit and to study all but a very few of these works, with which we have compared, when it was possible, numerous engravings and photographs.

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ERRATA.—VOL. I.

Page 34, line 10, *for* "The cottage of the Titians is now an inn, but was," *substitute* "The cottage of the Titians was."

,, 187, note, col. 2, line 3, *for* "Racolta de'," *read* "Raccolta di."

,, 336, line 6, *for* "was sent," *read* "Titian was sent."

,, 358, line 6, *for* "Davolos," *read* "Davalos."

TITIAN: HIS LIFE AND TIMES.

CHAPTER I.

Rise of Venice as a Maritime State; her decline in the sixteenth century.—Early Art defective but Oriental in Type.—Mercantile Occupations and their Influence.—Venetian Trade.—Effects of Territorial Extension on Venetian Art.—Religious and Ecclesiastical Policy; Manners and Customs; effect of both on Venetian Art.—Early Painting and Painters.—The Muranese.—The Bellini.—Slow progress of change in Pictorial Methods.—Introduction of Oil Medium.—The Venetians become Colourists and Landscape Painters.

VENICE in the sixteenth century, was not less celebrated for refined culture than Rome or Florence. In Venice—as in Tuscany—painting came to perfection after the heroic period; and the arts have been truly described as the gilded bark which covered the cankered trunk of a luxuriant tree.

Venice at the opening of the Christian era, was very much the counterpart of Tyre and Sidon in the præ-Christian ages. Her people were traders, sailing ships to the utmost limits of navigation, founders of colonies, manufacturers of glass and dyes. Before the inroads of the Huns, they had been known as hardy mariners on the coasts of the Mediterranean and of the Euxine Seas. After they became the vassals, though but in name, of the successors of

Constantine, they held an impregnable position in the lagoons, masters of the river mouths, from the delta of the Po to the Gulf of Trieste, tyrants in their commercial intercourse with the people of the neighbouring valleys, secure by means of the sea, from the greed of their enemies. On the eastern and western coasts of the Adriatic, they were equally active; their ships were well-known at Constantinople and Alexandria, and not unfrequently seen in the Straits of Gibraltar. They were peaceful merchants, so long as their trade was unimpeded, but ready to avenge the slightest insult done to their flag; and their naval power soon came to be courted by friends, and acknowledged by foes.

From a very early period they had learned to avoid territorial aggrandisement in the peninsula. Their first settlements were in Dalmatia and Istria. Stations were then founded in the eastern and western ports of Greece. The Italian tongue was carried by the mariners of the Rialto, to the banks of the Bosphorus, past the shores of the Black Sea, and up the stream of the Danube to the confines of Hungary. It is characteristic of the early development of Levantine commerce under Venetian colours, that in the tenth and eleventh century, no subject of the republic was allowed to carry despatches for foreign princes to Constantinople, without passing first through Venice. A natural jealousy filled the breasts of the merchants of the lagoons, who little brooked the rival powers of Pisa and Genoa; and though the emperors of the East had confirmed their privileges in all their depen-

dencies, and even allotted to them a distinct quarter of the Imperial city; they feared the enterprise of their western competitors, more than that of their more direct foes. Similar rivalry in the North of Europe afterwards, led the merchants to the well-known federation of the Hanse. In the south no such settlement was achieved; and the waters of the Adriatic and Mediterranean were as frequently dyed with the blood of the Italians fighting against each other, as with that of the Saracens or of the more alien Normans.

A favourite illustration of Venetian power at the close of the twelfth century, is that which tells of one hundred galleys armed at Venice in one hundred days. This marvellous display was effected at the time when Henry Dandolo helped the Crusaders to capture Constantinople, and Venice held state in the Imperial city with all but Imperial rank. Then indeed Venice might have been called the Queen of the Seas. She now owned, as her chroniclers affirmed, a quarter and a half of the whole Greek Empire; a part of Constantinople governed by her own laws; Candia, which had been bought of Boniface of Montserrat, and all the ports of call from Venice to the Dardanelles, and from thence to Alexandria. Wise in their generation, the Venetians had watched the gradual expansion of feudal power throughout the states of Europe. They had seen the rights of the many absorbed in the privileges of a few. Their struggles for the limitation of ducal power then began. Their acuteness as merchants rather favoured than excluded political craft; nor did either suffer

restraint from the forms of the constitution. It was no disgrace to the patrician to sit an hour in the counting-house, after he had sat an hour in the council of the State. The system of poise and counterpoise, which led to the firm establishment of an oligarchy, was perfected with profound cunning, and complete success; and Venice is the only republic in Italy, which lived to an age of decrepitude, whilst it is not unworthy of remark, that the enemy to whom she succumbed at last, was not a monarch, but the representative of the greatest European republic of modern times.

Towards the latter half of the thirteenth century, the Genoese and Greeks combined to humble the Venetians. The loss of an exceptionally favourable position at Constantinople was the result. But Venice felt no doubt that her hold of the Levantine ports was already precarious to an extreme degree. Behind the tottering throne of the Greek Emperors, there loomed the great and rising power of the Turks, whose Moslem brethren were indeed at no distant date to be expelled from Spain, but whose triumphant progress in the East was clearly foreshadowed. It was then we may believe, that Venice resolved to acquire territorial possessions in Italy. Then it was that whilst fighting the Turks and Genoese, she began to extend her authority over the mainland. Mistress of Treviso in 1338, she owned in 1415 all that portion of Italy which lies between the Isonzo and the Mincio, and the Doge Tommaso Mocenigo was able to boast in a public address, that the trade with

Lombardy alone, was worth ten millions of secchins every year, whilst her navy numbered forty-three galleys, and her merchant shipping 3,300 vessels manned by 36,000 sailors. It was during the Doge-ship of Tommaso Mocenigo, that Venice reigned supreme. His successor, Francis Foscari, kept the helm for thirty-four years, a period of fierce and destructive wars, during which Italian possessions were won and lost, but Constantinople fell, vainly defended by the Venetians and Genoese, into the hands of the Turks. No event recorded in history has had more influence on the destinies of European nations than this victory of the Moslems. The Sultans set their feet permanently on European soil; they deprived Genoa, in a single hour, of all her colonies, and all her greatness; they sapped the strength of Venice by constant encroachments; they brought Hungary and Austria to the verge of ruin, and they introduced a new element into the politics of the Old World. After a series of great and irretrievable losses, the Venetians found themselves at the close of the fifteenth century almost totally shorn of substantial power in the East. In 1477, the year of Titian's birth, she lost Lemnos, Mantinea, and Scutari of Albania, and many of her possessions in Greece. In 1499, she witnessed a formidable invasion of Friuli by the Turks. In 1503 she signed a humiliating peace with Bajazet the Second, and surrendered the whole of the Morea. In 1506 she opened the first page of the "libro d'oro," in which the patricians of the city, after glorying for centuries

in the name of "citizens," registered their titles to an hereditary noblesse, and the arts which had been gradually rising to perfection, shed a glorious sunset over the sinking form of the republic.

A striking feature in the development of pictorial art at Venice is the poverty of thought and execution in its earliest craftsmen. We look in vain for such historical figures as Cimabue, Duccio, Giotto, or Masaccio; and if we inquire the cause, the answer is obscure and unsatisfactory. It may be that the early Venetians, by abstaining from territorial extension, narrowed the field of individual enterprise to the smallest compass; that they were engaged in a struggle too earnest and too constant with hostile elements to do more than secure the foundations of their city on the mudbanks of the lagoons, or it may be again that their exclusive attention to navigation and commerce precluded the cultivation of the highest taste in painting. Clearly the Venetians were for a time mere importers of art. The pillars which upheld the archings of St. Mark's basilica were carried with patient labour from distant places; the horses which decorated its front were taken as spoil of war from Constantinople; the lion of the Arsenal was plunder from the Piræus; and the first mosaics of Venice and Torcello were set by Byzantine designers. The tone of art for centuries was Oriental; and we may believe that mariners and merchants whose "argosies were on the Ocean," whose markets were at every point of the compass, were content to

satisfy their requirements by way of traffic. The neglect which art endured extended alike to poetry and literature, and Venetian annalists can only record the passing visit of Petrarch; but there was a field in which, besides commerce, they gathered laurels,—the field of travel and discovery. To the Polos they owed their knowledge of Tartary and China. Through Marin Sanuto, Catarino Zeno, and Niccolò Conti, they became acquainted with Armenia, Palestine, Arabia, Egypt, Persia, India, Java, and Sumatra. Carlo Zeno told them of the frozen regions of Greenland and Iceland, and if it had not been contrary to their instincts and wishes that such discoveries should have been made, they would probably have found the sea-passage to the Indies and the continent of America. The whole purpose and activity of Venice lay in the transmission of merchandize from the East to the West and *vice versâ* by the inland seas. Her geographical position was eminently favourable to that purpose; and the picture which history gives us of the methods by which her trade was managed, is one of the most fascinating that can be conceived. In the beginning perhaps she carried salt of her own manufacture or fish of her own drying, the lagoons being well fitted for the production of those commodities. As her means increased she coasted down the shores of the Adriatic, disposing of her wares in the ports of Italy on the one hand, of Dalmatia, Istria and Greece on the other. She soon rounded Matapan and Spartivento, passed the Straits of Gibraltar and the

Dardanelles, and visited the far East as well as the far West. From those distant regions, and from the intermediate ports, she brought home goods in exchange for those which she carried thither, and these she disposed of either at the fairs of Lombardy or in the agencies of continental nations which had their counters in Venice. The utmost liberality was shown in allowing foreign merchants to settle. In the trade of those merchants no born Venetian was allowed to share. The produce which they carried to Venice from the continent, that which they bought for transport to the continent were stored in magazines, specially furnished for the purpose by the Venetian state. In these magazines the government levied import and export dues. Every year six fleets were formed, and manned, and convoyed at the public expense. The freightage of the fleet was sold by auction, and any one might ship his merchandize at the price of the day. One squadron sailed to the Black Sea with goods for Russia and Central Asia; another stopped at Constantinople after touching at the ports of Greece and the islands; a third took the Armenian traffic to the harbours of Asia Minor and Syria; a fourth fed the markets of Egypt through Alexandria; a fifth the Moors of Africa and Spain; the sixth went through the Straits and coasted to the Netherlands and British Isles. There was no intermediate navigation, everything that Venice sold was taken to, and carried from, Venice, in order that money might be made at the entering as well as at the clearing. With the concentration of

wealth manufactures went hand in hand; and Venice soon learnt to make camlets like those of Asia Minor, brocade like that of Persia; scarlet and crimson like that which had been peculiar of old to Sidon. Her glass became celebrated. She refined sugar and made soap. Her lace makers and leather dressers were celebrated as were her silk and velvet weavers. But she was quite as willing to export the manufactured produce of others as her own. The Lombard provinces after 1400 sold to the Venetians no less than 25,000 pieces of woollen cloth in one year for half a million of secchins; the Venetians in turn disposed of the cotton which they took from Macedonia, Candia, and Sicily, of the wool, spices, and slaves, which they brought from the East. In the Levant they sold coined money, and manufactures in exchange for which they accepted woollens, hemp, furs, hides, precious metals, spices, coffee and silks. The galleys which convoyed the merchant fleets were also used for freight; and it was a well-known privilege of the patricians that two of their sons should accompany each galley, that they might learn the cunning of trade and fit themselves for command as the naval captains of the future.

With such a life before them it was less strange than it might otherwise appear that the Venetian patricians should have failed to appreciate, or neglected to encourage, the higher forms of sedentary art. But when the era of conquest on the seas was closed, when provinces were acquired on the mainland, when Padua and Verona were occupied, and the

wild hills of Friuli fell off from the allegiance of the patriarchs, then a change occurred. It was no longer the Greek alone, or the pupil of the Greek, who practised painting. Other strangers than those who preserved the Byzantine traditions of their craft found their way to Venice—strangers from Italy and beyond the Alps —and painting, under their influence, acquired a new and more mighty impulse. The change began in the early part of the fifteenth century. In less than seventy years Venetian artists held a station as high and as honourable as that of the Tuscans. But then Venetian power was visibly declining. The sea-passage to the Indies had been discovered, and Vasco de Gama had broken the monopoly of the spice trade.* Fifty years more, and painting reached perfection in the hands of Titian, Tintoretto, and Caliari. It grew and bloomed and shed its flowers within the compass of two hundred years. It perished at half the age of the older art of the Tuscans.

Religious forms and local manners naturally affect the development of pictorial taste, and this is nowhere more true than at Venice. Venice was a devout—we may think a superstitiously devout—city, fond of ceremony, and proud of her numerous ecclesiastical

* It is a well-known fact, says the Economisto (1874), that the discovery of America, and the sea-passage to the Indies, was the cause of the loss to Italy of a privilege which she long enjoyed. Before those discoveries her merchants were the carriers, or agents for the carriage, of all the Eastern trade. After they were made, this position was gradually lost. Since the opening of the Suez Canal the old importance of Venice has revived. Venice imported from India during the years 1863—1867 goods to the value of a million lire. In 1873 her imports from India were 75 million lire.

foundations. Yet her rulers jealously guarded the Church from papal interference. The Venetians were a light-hearted race, whose freedom of manners was hardly equalled beyond the lagoons; yet they were governed with Draconian severity. The mixed influence of these elements had its effects upon the character and practice of painters, especially towards the close of the fifteenth century.

There is probably no place so frequently connected with religious legends as Venice. The city was founded under the protection of St. Theodore. It spread and increased under that of St. Mark, whose relics were taken by stealth from a church at Alexandria. After the lapse of a certain time, a cathedral bearing the apostle's name was built over his remains; and in order that the faithful might not doubt of his gratitude, St. Mark's appearance in a vision sealed with a supernatural approval the theft of his votaries. Twice in the lapse of ages the priests forgot where the bones of the patron saint reposed. Twice they were miraculously informed by his public apparition. On a day of hurricane and storm he was rowed by a fisherman to the encounter of a galley manned by the imps of Satan, and, as a token, the fisherman presented to the Doge the ring of St. Mark. The miracles of St. Mark in Venice were made subjects of pictorial representation, with the same devout belief as those which he performed in Alexandria or Constantinople.

A piece of the true Cross was preserved in a ponderous crucifix by the brethren of the "school" of St. John Evangelist. On a day of procession it happened

that cross and bearer fell through a bridge into the canal, but the holy wood of the Cross was not predestined to sink. It swam; and for many a year the Doge and clergy celebrated the event by a splendid ceremony. But this tendency to accept and to hallow supernatural agencies, was countervailed by a very subtle policy in the treatment of ecclesiastics, a constant restraint of papal power, and a general subordination of the priestly to the lay element. And it is the more remarkable that this should have been so because the public life of the Doges was deeply commingled with religious observances. The patricians affected to believe, and the people really thought, that all the emblems of the ducal dignity were conferred on the chief of the Venetian state, by Pope Alexander the Third; and the story of those concessions, together with the fictitious account of a naval victory gained by the Venetians over the Emperor Barbarossa, was made the subject of the earliest pictorial decorations in the council hall of the public palace.

There was much in the relative position of the papacy and Venice to make them suspicious of each other. As late as the middle of the fifteenth century, the Venetians were still slave traders, and sold their captives in the cities of Lombardy. There was an office at Rome for the redemption of slaves, and the traffic was naturally odious to the pontiffs. But this was a small matter compared with the mode in which Venice dealt with prelates and priests. She had such a jealousy of papal policy that she carefully excluded all ecclesiastics from her councils. Priests, even

though they should be Venetian nobles, were debarred from place in every form. The primates or patriarchs of Venice, were chosen by the State from the ranks of the noblesse.* Priests elected by their parishioners,† were subject to a tribunal of lay judges; and the primate had no share in appointing them. The patriarch of Aquileia was also chosen, though late in the history of the republic, from the ranks of the patricians by the Venetian Government. When at the last the Inquisition was allowed to take root, its power was materially curtailed by the appointment of the patriarch as president, and of two Venetian nobles as assessors, without whose presence and countenance, no sentence could be valid. Venice was for ages the refuge of priests or monks, who had escaped from the censures or penalties of their church in other cities of Italy. In her cloisters and nunneries there was a freedom unknown to similar establishments on the mainland, and the manners of the clergy were not subject to the same rigid supervision from lay magistrates as they would have been from their ecclesiastical superiors.

Though chroniclers have left us to guess what the state of society may have been in Venice at the close of the fifteenth century; they give us reason to believe that it was deeply influenced by Oriental habit. The separation of men from women in churches; the long seclusion of unmarried females in convents or in the privacy of palaces, were but the precursors to

* Delle cose notabile della città di Venetia. (Francesco Sansovino.) 12mo, Ven. 1592, p. 56.

† Sansovino, Ven. descr. ed. Martinioni, 4to, Ven. 1663, p. 290.

marriages in which husbands were first allowed to see their wives as they came in state to dance round the wedding supper table. The joys of home, and the endearing ties of open intercourse may have been known to Venetian families; but they were probably better cultivated amongst the poorer than amongst the richer classes. Rigid sumptuary laws regulated the dress of married women whose pace was controlled by the use of high and inconvenient pattens, and whose forms were rarely to be seen unless their white and silken veils were lifted by stealth in the gloom of churches, or in the dusk of streets at sunset. The mixed society of men and women, tolerated on state festivals or at masques and balls of rare occurrence, only made the contrast between ceremonial life and every day life the more striking. To the young and particularly to the rich, secret amours were very familiar, and if the stories of the garrulous Knight of St. Disdier be as true of the sixteenth as they apparently are of the seventeenth centuries, the familiar intrigues of serving maids and duennas which give zest to Lesage's Gil Blas had their daily counterparts in Venice.*

Something strikes us as suggestive in an answer once given by the Doge Domenico Contarini to an ambassador who asked him why Venetian women wore high and inconvenient clogs instead of shoes. "Shoes," said Contarini, "are too convenient." "*Pur troppo commodi, pur troppo.*" † To men who

* Le Chevalier de St. Disdier. La Ville et la République de Venise, 8vo, Paris, 1680.

† St. Disdier, *u. s.*

shunned the trouble or feared the danger of intrigues with women, more facilities were probably given in Venice than elsewhere. There was a general corruption in this respect during the sixteenth century throughout Italy, and Venice had a rival in Rome under Alexander the Sixth or Leo the Tenth, but Venice, whether rightly or wrongly, has carried off the palm of vice, and we shall see that bacchanals, or portraits of courtesans in gallant undress, were painted by celebrated masters at Venice long before such a thing was thought of in other parts of Italy. We may also observe that the poetic platonisms of Bembo and the fiery strophes of Tasso have a background of a common and unethereal sort which is distinctly repulsive, whilst the shameless confessions of a scribe like Aretino tell of a corrupt morality which bore its fruit in the profligacy of the sons of Titian and Sansovino.

The slow process of decomposition which early classic art underwent in South Italy, cannot, for obvious reasons, be studied at Venice; but such mosaics and pictures as are traceable to remote periods of Venetian culture, prove that similar phenomena occurred at Venice and at Rome. In both cities, so long as traditional types were preserved, the older forms were in advance of the new; but Venice may be distinguished even from Sienna by her obstinacy in clinging to the venerable lessons of an ancient craft. And there is an overwhelming concurrence of testimony to show that great artistic activity was co-existent with a low development of skill.

Early in the fourteenth century, the most important edifices at Venice were decorated by artists whose portable pictures we know to have been of the feeblest class, and, judging from analogy, we may believe that these artists were, without exception, of less power than the earlier mosaists, whose works gave colour to the churches of San Marco, Santa Maria di Torcello, or San Cipriano of Malamocco.*

At a time when the siege of Venice by King Pepin was alive in popular tradition, the battle of Canal Orfano was represented by order of the State on the market-place of Rialto, and it is evidence of the great age to which this fresco attained, that a public order decreed its renewal in 1459—more than a century before the time when the same subject was composed for the Hall of Great Council by Palma Giovinè.† When the palace of the "Commune" was built in 1324 near the bridge of Rialto, it was completely adorned with frescoes.‡ When the chapel of San Niccolò, in the Doge's palace, was decorated anew in 1319, it was covered with wall-paintings, representing subjects from the legend of Barbarossa and Pope Alexander the Third.§ We fail to discover the names of the artists to whom these commissions were entrusted; but that one of them may have been Paolo

* Many of these mosaics are preserved,—that of San Cipriano in the Friedenskirche, near Sans Souci, whither it was transferred by order of Frederic William IV. in 1837.

† The original order of council is in Lorenzi, Monumenti per servire alla storia del Palazzo ducale di Venezia. Part i. Ven. 1869, 4to, p. 81. Compare Sansovino's Ven. descr., pp. 347, 363.

‡ Pietro Guilombardo in Sansovino's Ven. descr., p. 364.

§ Lorenzi, p. 12.

di Venezia, who produced the great shrine of San Marco in 1345, and the altar-piece of San Niccolò in 1346, is a permissible assumption.*

At a great expense of money and labour, the Hall of Great Council in the Doge's palace at San Marco was begun in 1340, and finished in 1367. Like many of the monumental creations of the middle ages, this edifice was interrupted in its progress by plagues, by scarcity of workmen or money, and by the dishonesty of the servants of the republic. But during the government of Marco Cornaro, the whole of it was laid out with frescoes, of which a list has been preserved. On comparing this list with that which was subsequently made for the use of artists of the 16th century, we find that the subjects are the same. We find also that the grand and impressive scene of the Paradise which Tintoretto transferred to a canvas larger than any in the world, was composed before him by the ruder genius of Guariento, and more than this, that Guariento's Paradise lies concealed behind Tintoretto's canvas, the only relic of a cyclus unparalleled for its size and importance in any building of the Italian peninsula. We may visit and study in the galleries and churches of Venice and Padua, we may even find in Italian and German collections examples of the skill of Paolo, Guariento, Lorenzo, Stephano, and Semitecolo, the masters to whom the most honourable commissions were entrusted in the four-

* The shrine of St. Mark is still in existence. The altar-piece of S. Niccolò is no longer to be found, but the original record of its production is in Lorenzi, p. 33.

teenth century. As examples of scriptural and ecclesiastical art, they appear to be the poor and uncultivated product of a traditional practice which perished at Florence before the genius of Cimabue, and at Verona, three-quarters of a century later before the enterprise of Giotto's disciples, Avanzi and Altichiero. It is hard to believe that men of this stamp should have been accepted as fit by natural skill or education to paint historical subjects and portraits, yet authentic records vouch for the fact, that amongst the earliest adornments of the Hall of Great Council, the contemporary portraits of the Doges were considered the most important.

There is hardly a story more touching or better known in the annals of Venice than that of Marino Faliero, who perished by the hands of the executioner at the age of eighty, because he was driven, after a short reign of ten months, to strike a blow for supreme power. The journals of the Venetian Senate describe the portrait of Faliero as having been placed according to custom in one of the panellings of the Hall of Great Council; they tell how Pietro Zani, and Andrea Gradenigo proposed, in 1366, that the head should be severed from the rest of the picture, and inscribed with the words, "*fuit decapitatus ob crimine prodictionis.*" Ten years had elapsed since the date of Faliero's execution when this proposal was made. It struck the council as being too cruel to pass, but a resolution was almost unanimously carried that the picture should be removed, the spot on which it was hung being tinged in blue, and marked by a line,

"*Hic fuit locus Ser Marini Faletro decapitati pro crimine prodictionis.*" * It is characteristic of the importance which the Venetians attached to the lesson conveyed by Marino Faliero's death, that they renewed the inscription after the fire of 1577.

About the year 1400 the pictorial adornment of the ducal chapel and the frescoes of the Hall of Great Council were reduced to such a state of decay that orders were issued for their complete renewal; but when it became necessary to choose the painter to whom works of such importance might be confided, it appeared that Venice had no artists of her own to whom she could appeal; and the Venetian Government was obliged to entrust her commissions to Gentile da Fabriano and Vittore Pisano. Under the influence of these men, who carried to Venice something of a more modern style, the school of Murano arose, which feebly combined the accuracy and tenderness of the Umbrians with the grave conscientiousness of the Germans. But the Muranese school alone would not have succeeded in giving an original tone to Venetian art had not its later masters been subjected to influences altogether different from those which had been previously felt in the lagoons. About the time when Antonio of Murano and Giovanni d' Allemania were enjoying all but a complete monopoly of private practice at Venice, Jacopo Bellini settled at Padua, after taking lessons from Gentile da Fabriano. By associating with Donatello, who had

* See the Journal of the Council for Dec. 16, 1366, in Lorenzi, *u. s.* p. 39.

left Florence for the north, he acquired some of the more masculine qualities of the great Tuscan masters, and he was mainly instrumental in fostering that taste for classical sculpture which began to distinguish Mantegna. With Mantegna, who married his daughter, Jacopo Bellini probably associated for a time his two sons Gentile and Giovanni; and they were enabled, after his death, to settle at Venice and compete with the masters of the school of Murano.

No time could have been more favourable for enforcing a new system of teaching than that which the Bellini chose. In Venice proper Byzantine traditions still clung to the old guild whose schools vegetated in the quarter of Santa Sofia.* To the barbaric hardness and gaudy colours of the Byzantine, an air of softness and tenderness, till then unknown, had been added by the genius of the Umbrians and Veronese; but the laws of proportion and of form, the detail of design and movement, and the arts of linear perspective, remained uncultivated. It seemed as if there could be no true appeal to the realities of nature. The Bellini took to Venice the study of the nude and of antique sculpture, the rigid rules of linear perspective,

* The old guild of painters comprised painters, gilders, miniaturists, designers for stuffs, and embroiderers, leather-dressers, playing card-makers, painters of masks, and painters of shields. Their meeting-hall, erected in 1532 with the money left by Catena's will, was in the Calle Sporca, or Priuli, near Santa Sofia. In 1682 the figure painters, Zanchi, Celesti, Carl Loth, and others, with Cavalier Liberi at their head, withdrew from the guild, and formed an academy for themselves. See Sagredo (A.), Sulle consorterie delle arti edificative in Venezia; 8vo, Ven. 1856, pp. 125 and ffs.

and the picturesque charm of landscape. Their style was happily realistic and true—realistic indeed to a fault, inasmuch as it not only dealt with every furrow in the face and every projection of bone and muscle in the frame, but with the more marked forms of feeling as expressed by grief and anguish. But the reaction which they created was all the more powerful in proportion as it contrasted with the singular stiffness and conventional air of the creations of their predecessors, and it was necessary to administer a drastic remedy to the sickness which paralyzed the art of Venice. Round the Bellini, partly in rivalry, partly in friendship, a noble band of earnest working painters was formed; and in the last quarter of the fifteenth century it would have been possible for the Venetian Government to employ a dozen of able artists, where fifty years before not one had been discoverable. But here again the slow progress of change in Venetian, as compared with Tuscan, art was marked. Whilst in Florence and in the Florentine state the most intelligent craftsmen were striving to supersede the old process of tempera by the more rapid system of oils, the Bellini and the Vivarini were content to follow the old groove, and satisfy the demands of public taste with the technical mechanism inherited from their forefathers. The truth is that the Venetian masters had a task sufficiently heavy on their hands to discourage them from burdening their shoulders with technical problems. If we look back at the work which they accomplished between 1450 and the anniversary of the introduction of oil-paint-

ing in 1473, we are surprised at the rapidity and thoroughness of their progress, which, indeed, are unparalleled, except in Florence at the time of Giotto. There is as much difference between the Bellini or the Vivarini, and their immediate predecessors, as between the old tiller who scratched the soil with a spike and the more advanced ploughman who deepened and enlarged the furrow. We see these innovating painters searching the depths which their forerunners were utterly careless to explore. We see them collecting treasures of which no one in Venice had dreamt, and gathering a hoard of experience to be left as a ready bequest for the use of future craftsmen. The novel advantages of a more artful composition, a more natural representation of movement, or a more cunning outline, they all shared alike; but the Bellini were more subtly gifted than their brethren; they were not mere designers of altar-pieces, but masters of portrait, creators of composed pictures, and founders of landscape art. Leaving to Mantegna the more abstruse pursuit of the classical and sculptural, or the discovery of difficult problems in linear perspective, Giovanni Bellini acquired enough of both to suit the purpose of a colourist. Leaving to Crivelli to combine Mantegnesque dryness with Umbrian daintiness, and to the Vivarini the more superficial forms of Paduan realism, he fathomed many, if not all the secrets of human feeling, and discarding the mere solemnity of the Byzantine, replaced it by natural delineations, varying from majestic serenity to placid calm, active sympathy, or

sunny smile. Nor was it for the mere purpose of giving a superficial richness to his subjects, but with the aim of enhancing interest by the addition of something hallowed by custom and education, that he introduced practicable architecture and coloured ornament into his picture. He pleased the spectator, too, by frequently exchanging the solid and purely imaginary effect of gold ground, or tinted curtains, for that of a crisp white cloud hanging calmly in the atmosphere of a pure blue sky, above a landscape of hill and plain. And if we compare Bellini as a beginner with Bellini in a stage of riper manhood we shall contemplate with wonder the change from a quaint and unreal background of craggy bluffs to the pleasing expanse of verdant plains, quiet lakes, and alpine mountains. Keeping nothing of the Oriental, but the occasional use of Levantine costume, avoiding alike the gaudy richness of surface unmitigated by transitions and the faint delicacy of tints imperfectly relieved by depth of shadowing, he came very much nearer to nature in her moments of rest than any other master of his time at Venice, though unconscious as yet of those powerful effects which suggested themselves after the discovery of a new medium had multiplied the means at the artist's command.

After Antonello da Messina introduced into Venice the Flemish custom of mixing varnish mediums with pigments, some time elapsed before the Venetians mastered the process; but when they did so, many qualities which had merely germed expanded into a

luxuriant life. Colours began to acquire tones which in gorgeousness and brilliancy vied with the Venetian dyes, or with the hues of Muranese glass, and those Levantine tissues for which Venice was, above all other countries, celebrated. The buildings of the city, with their rich and variegated surfaces, suggested to Gentile Bellini those noble backgrounds of church and canal which the dryer system of tempera had not enabled him previously to realize. The waters of the lagoons, the bays of the Dalmatian and Istrian coasts, and the harbours of the Adriatic, were studied by Carpaccio with an effect altogether new. The softer expanses of the Paduan plain, with its distant fringe of Alp, fettered the attention of Giovanni Bellini. There came into Venice also a new class of painters, bred on the verge of the Brescian and Bergamasque provinces, or born in the Friulan hills, each of whom carried some new form of landscape with him—each of whom added something to the richness of Venetian colouring. So Cimà, Basaiti, Previtali, and Palma Vecchio. The Venetians, we have seen, were losing the mastery of the seas. They were displaying their forces on the continent; conquering provinces on the mainland, and making Venice what it had not been before—a centre of Italian culture. They attracted a rising generation of artists, whose view was not confined to the lagoon, whose practice was not bounded by the city—and thus, by a providential combination of causes, the ground was laid for the grand edifice of Venetian art.

CHAPTER II.

Cadore and its History.—The Vecelli Family.—Gregorio Vecelli.—Social Condition of the Cadorines.—Cadorine Geography and Landscape.—Cadore Town and Castle.—Titian's House; Views near it, and their effect on Titian's Art.—Titian's Birth; his Family Relations, and where he learnt to paint.—Madonna of Casa Vallenzasco.—Antonio Rosso.

A TRAVELLER who should ascend the Campanile of St. Mark might chance to see the Venetian Alps as they soar, ghost-like and half-clad in mist, above the waters of the lagoons. High amongst the peaks of that extensive range he would discern the form of the Antelao, which, at a distance of seventy miles, towers over the valleys of Cadore.

Cadore, the birth-place of Titian, is a mountain district, watered by the torrent of the Piave, which takes its rise in the Carnic Alps, and falls into the Adriatic at Porto di Cortellazzo. Though little frequented by travellers of the present day, the road which leads from Mestre, and thence through Conegliano and Longarone to Pieve, is one of the main arteries of communication between the Piave and the Drave. Turning from Pieve, through the Val d' Ampezzo, it skirts the base of the Antelao to the eastward, and that of the Pelmo to the westward, crossing the higher Alps past Bottestagno, to join the

sources of the Drave as it runs towards Klagenfurt. Cadore is a border-land, deeply imbedded in the mountains, and a near neighbour of Tyrol; but being situated south of the Carnic crests, and connected by its rivers with the Adriatic, always had Italian sympathies. We find it as early as the eleventh century under the rule of the patriarchs of Aquileia, administered by a count who acknowledged the patriarch as his feudal lord. But the Cadorines were wont to boast of their municipal institutions as conveying an almost absolute freedom. Though nominally admitting their dependence on the patriarch by accepting his vicar, and doing homage to the count by the recognition of his captain, they governed themselves by means of a council, the privileges of which were as liberal as they were extensive. It is a remarkable coincidence, that the earliest Count of Cadore, who founded the "Caminese" house in the eleventh century, bore the name of Guecello, which also descended to the Podestà of Pieve, of whose race Tiziano Vecelli came.

Once and once only there was reason to anticipate that the Cadorine valleys would revert to the Empire, of which they had originally been a feud. In 1335, the family of the Caminese counts became extinct, and Lewis of Bavaria gave Tyrol, Belluno, and Cadore to his son, the Count of Brandenburg. Later still, the armies of Sigismund of Hungary secured the allegiance of Friuli and its dependencies, but this was a temporary conquest, for Venice having acquired the mainland, Cadore gave itself, in 1420, to the

republic, reserving only those rights which from time immemorial she had been allowed to enjoy.

Ser Guecello di Tommaso da Pozzale was elected Podestà of Cadore in 1321.* He was the common ancestor of the Vecelli, but it was Bartolommea, the wife of Guecello's grandson, who brought into the house the name of Titian, for part of her dowry was the patronage of a chapel in the Pieve, dedicated to San Tiziano of Oderzo.† Her husband was Guecello, or Vecelli, who died in 1451; and thus the name and surname, which became famous in the sixteenth century, are traced distinctly back to the middle of the fifteenth. But there was more than one Titian amongst the Vecelli. At the very outset, Tiziano Vecelli, a lawyer of note in the administration of Cadore, is to be distinguished from Tiziano Vecelli, the painter, his kinsman; and numerous Titians succeeded each other as sons or cousins, or cousin's cousins, till past the year 1600.

It is difficult to fathom the causes which induced a member of this old race to apprentice his children to the trade of painting. In the direct and collateral lines, the Vecelli had mostly followed the profession of the law or of arms. Guecello the 1st, Guecello the 2nd, Antonio, and Conte, father, son, grandson, and great grandson had all been lawyers.‡ Of Conte Vecelli, the Cadorine annals relate that he was one of the councillors of the Pieve, in whom the people most

* Ciani, Storia del Popolo Cadorino, 8vo, Padua, 1856, and Ceneda, 1862, vol. i., p. 306.

† Cadore MS., by Dr. Taddeo Jacobi.

‡ Jacobi's Cadore MS.

implicitly trusted. To his prudence they appealed when a quarrel arose in 1478 between the Podestà and the council. His aptitude for business was acknowledged when a difficult manipulation of the corn supply became necessary in 1482 and 1504. The weight of his experience was decisive when the Venetian Government taxed its outlying provinces for the purposes of a Turkish war; and his mission to Venice in 1501 caused the removal of an odious duty on "forests, meadows, and mountains." * But Conte was as poor as he was influential, and on a notable occasion, when hundreds of ducats were subscribed by the councillors of Pieve to replenish the empty stores of the district, he rose to declare "that he only gave ten ducats, because he could give no more."†

Gregorio, Conte's son and Titian's father, was a soldier "equally distinguished by his wisdom in the council of Cadore and by bravery as a soldier in the field." He was chosen captain of the "Century" of Pieve in 1495, and held that office certainly till 1508.‡ He was overseer of the corn stores at Pieve in 1518, member of council from 1523 to 1527, superintendent of the Castle repairs in 1526; and inspector of mines in 1525.§ He died after 1527, and his countrymen have not forgotten how well he behaved in the campaign which followed Maximilian's invasion of Friuli in 1508.‖ A distant relative, Vincenzo Vecelli, calls him a "tribune" raised to municipal honours by the

* Ciani, Storia, ii., 45, 71–3, 126-8.
† Ibid., p. 130.
‡ Jacobi's Cadore MS.
§ Ibid.
‖ Ibid.

choice of the people.* His portrait by Titian, which has perished, represented him in armour, from which we might infer that he prized his rank as a soldier more than his honours as a "tribune."† But Gregorio's position may have been honourable without giving him wealth; and his sword and coat-of-arms were perhaps all that he had to bequeath; and under these circumstances prudence might suggest that he should bring his children up to an "art" rather than to a profession. Nor must it be forgotten that however noted Cadore may have been for the energy and thrift of its peasantry, it was a poor and thinly peopled hill country; and there is much in the life of Titian to suggest that the character of the Cadorines —like that of the Swiss, the Scotch, or the Gascons of those days, was affected by the pinched habits of a mountain population.‡ Cadore was so situated that her agricultural produce hardly sufficed for more than three months' consumption of the inhabitants in any one year; § and such was the uncertainty of the times and the insecurity of the roads in the fifteenth century that a constant supply was only obtained by a judicious system of purchase and storage under the superintendence of the municipality. In summer, milk,

* Orazione panegirica recitata da Vincenzio Vecelli sopra la spoglia di Francesco Vecelli, in Ticozzi, Vite dei Pittori Vecelli, 8vo, Milan, 1817, p. 321. Vincenzo Vecelli was a relative whom Titian appointed to the office of a notary at Cadore on the 15th of September, 1540. Jacobi's Cadore MS.

† Orazione, *sup.*

‡ "Might not this 'mountain man,'" says Mr. Josiah Gilbert, acutely, "have been something of a 'canny Scot' or a shrewd Swiss." — Cadore, or Titian's Country, 4to, London, 1869, p. 14.

§ Ciani, Storia del Popolo Cadorino, vol. ii., p. 112.

cheese, and butter, and in autumn fruit were naturally abundant; for the country was one of mountains, forests, orchards and pasture; but for the winter and indeed for part of autumn and spring the council of Cadore bought corn by contract either from the Germans or from the lowland farmers of Treviso and Friuli, carting it up with great labour to the *fondachi* or stores, of which there was one in each of the ten "centuries" into which Cadore was divided.* The distribution of the contents of these stores in the shape of grain, flour and bread, at a minimum of profit to the more wealthy, or below cost price to the poor, formed part of the onerous duties of the public officers of the district. In many other pursuits besides that of agriculture the Cadorines eked out a small and not always abundant existence. Their real wealth lay in the produce of the forests and mines. They supplied Venice with some of the timber which went to build the galleys of their navy —wood in the rough or wood cut into planks in the saw mills of the country. An entire quarter of Venice is called "Alle Zattere" from the rafts that floated down the Piave and other rivers to the lagoons. The iron mines, which are now completely exhausted, were in Titian's time productive; the able-bodied people found employment as miners or cutters of timber; or they busied themselves in floating rafts from the uplands, upon which they loaded the iron ore, the wool and hides, which the country furnished. Merchants, land and house-owners,

* Ciani, Storia, ii. 120, 124.

and house keepers remained at home with the aged, the infirm and the children; there was a current of traffic along the main road which gave employment to carriers with their carts, their oxen and horses. The surplus population wandered periodically to the lowlands and back again. For almost all it was a life bristling with privations, but the air was pure, the race healthy and strong. The Cadorines had in an eminent degree the endurance, the independence, the shrewdness of mountaineers.

The mere statement that Cadore is an Alpine country is suggestive as to the character of the district in which Titian was born. It is a land of gorges and defiles, of peaks and torrents; much snow in the mountains during several months of the year, yet snow less visible than that on the Pennine or Bernese Alps, because of the steepness and jagged nature of the dolomites, which thrust their saw-shaped summits in a thousand fantastic ways into the sky. West of the Piave, Antelao soars to a height little short of 11,000 feet; Pelmo is but little lower. The horns and slabs of Marmarolo are so numerous, and its crags so quaintly rent, that we find it hard to single out the tallest. East of the Piave, at a varying level of 8,000 or 9,000 feet, are the rugged points of Cornon, Cridola, and Duranno. Cadore itself is high, the Castle-bluff, hundreds of feet above the boiling Piave which washes its base. In contrast with the bare crags, which are grey and pale, or dark and black, or radiant with golden light,

according as the sun is rising, setting, or overcast with storm clouds, the lower ranges look rich in their coats of verdure; and it is hard to convey, in any description, the mighty impress of a nature so solemn and so grand, so luxuriant in its vegetation, so bare and rugged in its barrenness, so full of variety in its lines and tints. Masses of changing shapes rise in picturesque confusion above each other and are lost in mist, lying low and sluggish in rifts and hollows. But above the mist, and sometimes mingling with higher clouds, the summits again appear, and shoot with fanciful boldness into the sky; summits far away from all human habitation; upheaved perhaps in centuries uncounted, as corals from the beds of fathomless seas. Below all these the forms of vegetation are surprisingly diverse. The silver threads of white torrents cut up the mountain sides, or the crystal waters of brooks run rapidly through wooded hollows, or the breadth of the valleys contracts, and from the road which human ingenuity has built on its precipitous sides, we look upwards at the sky through a lane of rock, or down the depths at the wilderness of waters that gives out to the ear its never-ending roar—sometimes a bold arch is thrown across a ravine, and the rushing torrent pours headlong down the pass which no human foot can tread. Far up on the cliff, which seems all but inaccessible, we see the battlements of castles, which in bygone days effectually checked the passage of an enemy.

Such landscapes as these are to be found within a very narrow compass in the district of Cadore.

Bottestagno, Pieve, and Tre Ponti, are marked by ruins of stalwart towers. Above Longarone, the road from Venice enters a rugged defile, and ascending the right bank of the Piave, which foams wildly below, issues out at Perarolo, where a bridge crosses the tributary torrent of the Boite. Here, of old, the traveller followed the left bank of the stream to Valle; now he winds his way due north, along the sides of Monte Zucco, turning westward by Tai if his object be the Vale of Ampezzo, running straight for Pieve if he seeks the sources of the Piave. From the bend under Zucco he will see the Castle of Cadore, on a bluff, a little in front to the eastward the village of Sotto Castello, and if approaching the hill from the latter place he will enter a lane, on the right hand side of which a cottage lies, under the roof of which an inscription tells him—Titian was born.

Looking up the lane the ruins of the castle are visible;—ruins of which varying representations have been found in a sketch ascribed to Titian, and in a lithograph from a drawing of the last century. Its walls are much reduced in height, as the stones were taken to rebuild the church of Cadore. North-west of the castle, on the saddle between it and the slopes rising towards Pozzale, is the church in an unfinished state, and the campanile overlooking the market-place; the whole relieved in distance by mountains and the dolomite fringe of Marmarolo. It is necessary to be minute in describing the natural characteristics of the situation and landscapes of Cadore, because Titian who lived in his childhood amongst them, and

visited them frequently in his manhood, transferred them to his pictures as frequently as the more expanded views of the lowlands, and there can be little doubt that the grandeur of the scenery which surrounded him in his infancy, made its impress on his mind, and helped to produce that love of natural effects, which is so conspicuous in his works, and enabled him to become the greatest landscape painter of the Venetian school.

The cottage of the Titians is now an inn, but was once part of a clump of houses and gardens, belonging to Conte Vecelli. As far back as records reach—in this case as far back as the close of the sixteenth century—it was described as being situate in the Contrada Lovaria, and to be distinguished by its contiguity to the piazzetta called Arsenale. That subsequent to the death of Conte Vecelli in 1508-13, it passed to his son Gregorio, from him to Titian, then to Francesco, and finally to Titian's son Pomponio, is shown in documents.* The contract of sale, by which Pomponio parted with the cottage and its *cortile* to Giovanni da Cesco in 1580, is still preserved; and there is every reason to believe that Gregorio lived and died there, and that his son Francesco used it as a dwelling. On the other hand it is not so clear as local annalists have thought that Titian or his brother and sisters were born there, for it is stated that Conte's property was divided at his death between his two

* Cadorin (Ab. Giuseppe), Dello Amore ai Veneziani di Tiziano Vecelli, 4to, Ven. 1833, pp. 24–27, and 76. Maier. A. Della Imitazione Pittorica, 8vo, Ven. 1818, p. 263.

sons Antonio and Gregorio, and in order to show the probability of Titian's birth in a cottage belonging to his grandfather, it would be necessary to prove that Gregorio lived in that cottage in Conte's lifetime, yet there is some evidence to favour the belief, that Conte did grant to Gregorio the use of the cottage in the contrada Lovaria. In so far as they have been preserved at all, the surveys of Pieve do not reveal that Gregorio ever dwelt anywhere else than in the piazzetta called Arsenale, and one of the earliest biographers who treats of Titian's childhood at Cadore, speaks of the cottage as that in which he was born. We shall have occasion to follow the fortunes of several members of Titian's family, and amongst others of Tizianello his cousin thrice removed, who died at Venice in 1650. Tizianello, on the 16th of August 1622, dedicated to the Marchioness of Arundel and Surrey an anonymous life of Titian, which he described as having been written by a gentleman studious of the great master's works. Being the only memoir of its kind that shows any acquaintance with Cadore, and having been written less than fifty years after the painter's death, it deserves particular attention. The author confesses to an enthusiastic admiration for the "modern Apelles." He expresses a hope that his narrative may be read with some sort of interest, and after this preamble he says:—

"The famous Titian was born at Pieve, the principal castle of the country of Cadore . . . a castle reputed impregnable, resting on a very high hill to which the ascent is by a single path surrounded by

broken rocks and inaccessible precipices. . . At the foot of the fortress lies the town, and the palace in which the vicars chosen by the council of Cadore reside. It is a place of small circuit, but prettily laid out. In the centre of the piazza is a fountain of fresh and limpid water. . . Noble palaces are in the neighbourhood, amongst them the house in the place called Arsenale, in which Titian was born in 1477."*

The true indication of the spot upon which Titian's house now stands, and a straightforward assertion that Titian was born there, form the pith of this extract, whilst a characteristic minuteness of description distinguishes the "house" of the Vecelli from the *palaces* in its vicinity. In the absence of other proofs, this may be accepted as a sufficient record of the birthplace of Titian; but, even were it not so, we should have no difficulty in picturing to ourselves the haunts of his youth, since he may be held to have been as much at home in the dwelling of his grandfather as in that of Gregorio; and in the gardens that overlook the Piave or the slopes of Tai, or on the pine-clad summits of Monte Zucco, he might equally be able to watch the sunset darkening the dolomites of Marmarolo, the mist swathing the peaks of Cridola and Cornon, or the storm cloud gathering on the summits of the Pelmo.

The most intricate puzzles with which the historian has to deal in the domain of art, arise from careless

* Breve Compendio della Vita del famoso Titiano Vecellio di Cadore . . . 4to, Ven. 1622, pp. i. ii.

statements of the birth, the age, or death, of almost contemporary painters. Titian, Giorgione, and Palma Vecchio, are so intimately connected as to make it highly desirable that we should know exactly when they were born and when they died; yet this is the information which no research enables us to acquire.

Of Giorgione Vasari says, in his first edition, that he was born in 1477, in his second that he was born in 1478; but in both editions that he died in 1501, aged 34.* If the last of these facts be correct, the date of 1478 cannot be maintained; but it would be consistent to say that Giorgione came into the world in 1476 or 1477, for not knowing the month in which Giorgione's death occurred, we cannot tell to a certainty the year of his birth.

Palma Vecchio died at Venice between the 28th of July and the 8th of August, 1528, at the age—if we believe Vasari—of 48.† He may, therefore, have been born between the 29th of July, 1479, and the 7th of August, 1480. But these dates and those in respect of Giorgione depend on Vasari's credibility as to the age of Palma and Giorgione on their death-bed.

In a letter written on the 1st of August, 1571, to Philip II. of Spain, Titian describes himself as an "old man of 95," and this, though it might point to Titian's birth in 1476, coincides also with Ridolfi's assertion that he was born in 1477.‡ As matters

* Vasari, Le vite de' più ecc. pittori, &c., 8vo, Florence, 1846—1870; vii. 80, 87.

† Vas. ix. 145.

‡ See *postea*, and compare Ridolfi, Le Maraviglie dell' Arte. Ediz. Seconda, 8vo, Padua, 1835, i. 196, with Tizianello's Anon. Life, p. 2, and Ticozzi's Vecelli, p. 7.

stand we are bound to assume that Titian and Giorgione are contemporaries, older by some few years than Palma Vecchio; yet if we look at the works of Titian we find that they reveal some dependence in him on Palma and Giorgione, whilst history tells us that Titian imitated Giorgione, and tradition recalls his love for Palma's daughter.*

Before the discovery of Titian's declaration of his birth it would have been free to any inquirer to accept Vasari's authority as to Giorgione's or Palma's age and reject it as to Titian,† or vice versâ, a middle course would necessarily have led to the absurdity of admitting that Titian imitated a painter not older than himself, and courted the daughter of an artist some years his junior. As it now seems clear that Titian was not born later than 1477 we might conclude that Giorgione and Palma both died older than Vasari supposed.

Titian, whose birth we have now discovered, was the son of Lucia Vecelli by Gregorio di Conte, being the only one of four children, himself, Francesco, Catherine, and Orsa, whose age has been approximatively ascertained.‡ Dolce, in his "Dialogo," says

* We now know that Palma Vecchio had no legitimate children. See History of North Ital. Painting, ii. 483, and Boschini's Carta del Navegar, 8vo, Venezia, 1660, p. 368.

† The writers of these lines thought, and still think, Titian younger than either Giorgione or Palma. They were, however, inclined to transpose Titian's birthday to a later date than 1477, rather than to put back those of Palma and Giorgione to an earlier period, and in this they made a mistake. See North Italian Painting, ii. pp. 119—120.

‡ See Aretino (Pietro) Lettere, 8vo, Paris, 1609, vol. v. p. 243; MS. records, which prove the

that Titian was taken to Venice as a boy of nine,* Tizianello's "Anonimo," that he left Cadore at the age of ten. Both agree that he was reared and had his schooling under his father's roof, and that he was taken young to Venice, where he made his fortune.† Is it equally clear that he was taught to draw at Cadore? An anecdote, which almost coincides with one told by Vasari in the Life of Pordenone, is related by Tizianello's "Anonimo" of Titian's boyhood. He says the child showed an early inclination for art "by painting on the side of his house a Madonna with the juice of flowers, and such was the charm of the colours as to surprise his father, his relatives, and friends." ‡ It is almost a pity to disturb so pretty a tale by doubts and questionings, and it may be confessed that if Tizianello had spoken of wild fruit instead of flowers, as producing the juices with which Titian painted, he might have been believed. But the misfortune which attends anecdotes of this kind is that they become further distorted by credulity, and it is probably in consequence of Tizianello's story that a Madonna is shown inside a house adjacent to Titian's cottage, and that tradition assigns this Madonna to Titian's childhood.

As to the locality: This Madonna is painted in fresco

marriage of Catterina di Gregorio with Matteo Soldano, Inspector of Mines at Pieve; and Ticozzi's Vite dei pittori Vecelli, p. 251.

* Dolce, Dialogo della Pittura, Ed. Daelli, 12mo, Milan, 1863, p. 63.

† This is confirmed from various sources, amongst others, from Titian's own petition to the Council of Ten, dated May 31, 1513, in which he says, "Havendo da puto in suso io . . . postome ad imparar l'arte!" See *postea*.

‡ Breve compendio, *supra*, p. 3.

inside the Casa Vallenzasco at Pieve, a house previously inhabited by a family of the Sampieri, to which additions were made, which turned the outer wall into the side of an inner room. As to the date and fashion of the fresco: It is greatly injured, having lost some old and gained some new colours, but being still sufficiently preserved to justify an opinion. The Virgin sits in an arm-chair at a window; she holds the child in a standing position on her knee, and bends her glance towards an angel, who kneels at her feet. An opening behind a curtain of tapestry gives a view of sky and hills.* The drawing of this fresco is indeed childish, and there is every reason for concluding that the hand which executed it was that of

* Renaldis, the author of a History of Friulan Painting, published in 1798, does not confound the Madonna described by Tizianello with that in the Casa Sampieri. He assumes the loss of the first and the subsequent execution of the second by the same hand. He describes the fresco as a monochrome, and speaks of the kneeling angel as being in the act of presenting a tablet to the Virgin. Both assertions are incorrect. See Renaldis [Girolamo de'], Della Pittura Friulana, 4to, Udine, 1798, p. 63. The fresco on the first floor, framed in wood, is ill preserved. The Virgin's head is turned to the left, that of the infant to the right, and Christ holds in his hand an orb. The angel, whose wings are almost obliterated, kneels on the right knee; his hands are joined in prayer, and what Renaldis takes for a tablet is the arm of the Virgin's chair. Of the landscape fragments only remain. The colours are blind and opaque, but sharp and decided in tone; but there are damaging spots in many places, as on the hip and shoulder of the infant, and the Virgin's blue mantle is ground down to the preparation. The fall and lie of the drapery, and the detail of folds, is childish; yet it is easy to see that the contour and handling are of the sixteenth century. The lights struck in with quick brush-strokes in drapery, the modern movement of the Virgin, all tell the same tale, and prove that we have not to do with even a boy of the fifteenth century.

a boy, but a boy of what age and of what time? When Titian went to Venice the fifteenth century was closing; but it was still the fifteenth century. It was the period of Bellini's striving, previous to the complete transformation of Venetian art by his own efforts and those of Palma and Giorgione. The painter of the Madonna before us is one who witnessed the change, a boy of the Vecelli family it may well be, since the family yielded more than one generation of painters, but certainly not Titian.

Traditions which assign to Titian the Madonna of Casa Vallenzasco tend distinctly to distort the history of Venetian art. But others which give to Titian a master of the old Friulan school, are scarcely less mischievous as they countenance the belief that the style of a great artist can be influenced by teaching attained before the age of nine. The eagerness shown by Friulan antiquaries to prove the descent of Titian's manner from Antonio Rosso, has been so great that they have succeeded thoroughly in constructing his pedigree and there are tables in existence, fortunately not printed, which show the ramifications of the Rossi family from the middle of the thirteenth to the close of the eighteenth century. But Antonio Rosso, whose frescoes and altarpieces were executed in various churches of Cadore between 1472 and 1502, is not entitled to any consideration whatever, being a mere continuator of the old and childish traditions of Alpine art which disappeared happily for ever as the pupils of the Vivarini, Bellini,

and Cima, extended their influence into the regions bordering on the Tyrol.*

* Lanzi, whose complete history of painting appeared in 1796, was the first to countenance the theory that Titian had a master in the art of painting in Cadore, and that that master was Rosso. See Roscoe's Lanzi. Ed. of 1847, vol. ii. p. 157. Neither Vasari nor Ridolfi, nor indeed any of the older Venetian writers, knew anything of Rosso; even Ticozzi is silent respecting him. But see for some account of Rosso, Hist. of North Italian Painting, vol. ii. p. 172.

CHAPTER III.

Titian leaves Cadore.—Venice as he found it.—Titian's Masters: Sebastian Zuccato; the Bellini.—State of Venetian Art.—The Rialto.—Painters' Studios.—Social Condition of Painters.—House-painting, and Titian as a House-painter.—Titian's Apprentice time.—Portraits of his Father and Mother.—Early Fresco at Pieve, and dubious early Works.—Titian's first Madonna.—Growth of his style.—Influence of Palma.—The "Man of Sorrows," San Rocco.—The "Cross-bearing Christ," San Rocco.—"Artless and sated Love."—Titian and the Antique.—Venice, Cæsar Borgia, and the Pesari.—Votive Picture of Bishop "Baffo."—Continued Influence of Palma.

TITIAN left Cadore a child to learn a trade at Venice. What a contrast between the place he was leaving and that to which he was repairing! Cadore lovely with its pure air, high Alps and wild scenery, its small and modest dwellings, its poor and thrifty people, its traffic by horse and cart on a mountain road. Venice a city of enchantments, rising by magic from the bosom of the sea, resting miraculously on the waters; her streets, lanes, her houses, palaces, traffic on canals, pleasures, luxurious and expensive, the people half asleep, it seemed, by day, but full of life at night, driving bargains at Rialto, talking politics at San Marco, trading with the world or gambling on the piazza. A boy like Titian would see and gape at the wonders of the place; but he would very soon be told that beneath the glitter of the scene there lay a hard and solid substance of reality. The splendour and the

tinsel were on the surface; hard work beneath it. If Titian had already practised the art at Cadore, all the better for him; if he had but an early developed passion and inclination for painting, here was the place to indulge them. Tizianello believed that Titian came to Venice to prosecute his studies; Vasari and Dolce thought he meant to start as a beginner. In either case the place was fitly chosen.* Titian had been sent to one of his relations in Venice, some say a brother of Gregorio, others a brother of Lucia, Vecelli.† The first care of this relative was to deliver the boy into the hands of an artist to be taught. And here Venetian history leaves him, taking no heed of his life or doings until he issues from the throng of competitors and appears—a master at the Fondaco de' Tedeschi. Venetian annals are full of similar gaps and chasms, which seem to prove that the brilliancy of a man's achievements may dazzle the witnesses of his success and disable them from inquiring into its causes. But the difficulty of repairing in the nineteenth century the neglect of the sixteenth, though not absolutely insurmountable, is naturally very great; and much that Titian's contemporaries might have told is to us mere matter of conjecture.

Vasari in his curt way says that Titian's master was Giovanni Bellini; but that he subsequently became an imitator of Giorgione.‡ It would be folly

* Vas. xiv. 18. Dolce, Dialogo, 63.

† If less trouble had been taken with this point, and more with others of greater interest, we should perhaps be better acquainted with the school years of Titian. But see Tizianello's Anon. p. 3; Dolce's Dialogo, p. 63; and Vasari, xiii. p. 18.

‡ Vas. xiii. 18.

to pretend to be satisfied with so vague a statement. Dolce is a little more explicit. According to his account Sebastian Zuccato, a Venetian mosaist, first took charge of Titian, but afterwards gave him up to Gentile Bellini. Gentile disapproved of his pupil's habit of bold and quick drawing, and estranged him by saying that no progress was to be expected on the path into which he had ventured. Titian in disgust left Gentile's workshop and wandered into that of Giovanni Bellini. But even Giovanni's lessons struck him as unsatisfactory, and he became Giorgione's partner.* There are pictures in existence which give clear evidence of Titian's early style; and if the proverb be true that "the paw betrays the lion," we must accept Dolce's narrative with the greatest suspicion. It cannot be said that Titian always drew boldly and hastily, because on the contrary he was in his youth a most careful and minute draughtsman; and if we believe that Gentile Bellini reproved the habit of rapid execution, that reproof must have been administered in the days of Titian's manhood. Again, Titian's manner as a rising artist, ought, if Dolce and Vasari are correct, to betray the exclusive teaching of the Bellini whilst the works of his riper years should display the influence of Giorgione's; but nothing can be more incorrect than such an assumption. Titian was not exclusively Bellinesque as a youth any more than he was exclusively Giorgionesque as a man, and even allowing for the originality of genius, we must doubt that Bellini or Giorgione

* Dolce, Dialogo, 63.

were his masters to the exclusion of others equally illustrious and equally influential. Dolce names Sebastian Zuccato as the first artist to whom Titian was introduced. Palma Vecchio is mentioned as the father of Violante for whom Titian had all the affection of a lover.* Titian had no more intimate friends in later years than Francesco and Valerio the sons of Sebastian Zuccato; for years he drew from the same female models as Palma, and he worked too in a style which is more closely allied to the style of Palma than it is to that of any other craftsman of the time.

It is unhappily true, that nothing is known of Sebastian Zuccato, except that he was a mosaist; but he must have been a painter also, and not only that, but a painter of name, for he was, at some unknown period, syndic of his guild at Venice.† But of what help is this in the darkness that prevails? We can conjecture that he gave the boy his first lessons, but the trail which might lead to further discoveries is lost. We are thus precluded by causes difficult to control, from tracing the steps by which Titian acquired a brilliant position in the first years of the 16th century; but our view of the art exercised at Venice at the close of the preceding age is open; and this, in conjunction with indications which the literature of the period affords, may enable us to follow the path which the hero was fortunate enough to pursue.

If we assume that Titian came down from the Cadorine hills about 1488, we can imagine no better

* Boschini, Carta del Navegar, pp. 368, 369.

† Zanetti, Pittura Venez. Sec. ed. 12mo, Ven. 1792, p. 736.

time for securing to the boy the education which he required. Gentile Bellini had not indeed as yet exhibited his Procession of the Relic; but that noble masterpiece was probably one of the first compositions of moment which met the youth's eye when he left the first and most elementary school form. That Gentile and Titian, in the respective positions of master and pupil should not have agreed may or may not be true; but Gentile was not the less a great painter. He was certainly the most serious, the most scientific, and the most able artist of his day; and no Venetian before or since was more perfectly acquainted than he with the laws of perspective and composition. Giovanni Bellini, more brilliant but less profound, had not as yet produced anything as thoroughly modern as the Madonna of San Zaccaria, but his Madonnas at the Frari, or Santa Maria of Murano, would show how thoroughly he could combine the facilities of oil with the conscientiousness of tempera methods; with what skill he united polished modelling with correct outline, coupling both with effective brilliancy of tone, harmonious juxtaposition of tints, bold touch and breadth of contrast in light and shade. Carpaccio was about to compose that grand and striking series of canvases which illustrates the legend of St. Ursula. Antonello was still living, the greatest portrait painter of his time, the master who shared with Giovanni Bellini the heart of Giorgione. Cima was about to rival Giovanni as a colourist in the setting of those bright altarpieces which now charm us by their grave but serene solemnity. At the Hall

of Great Council Giovanni Bellini was working under his brother as chief, and with Luigi Vivarini, as a rival. Palma and Giorgione were younger men whose mark was to be left on their country's art.

We can only presume to suggest the relations of the Bellini and their followers to Titian and his practice. We may believe that Titian was first apprenticed to an artist of obscure fame, that after the usual probation he wandered successively into the workshops of Gentile and Giovanni Bellini, enjoying the companionship of Palma and Giorgione, and possibly entering into partnership with both of them in turn. We may remember meanwhile that Venetian painting in 1488 was still in a state of transition, that tempera was no longer a medium in which great masters consented to work, though boys were still taught to paint in it. But oil pigments were applied by men who had lived for a great part of their lives on the traditions of tempera. The careful processes and minute habits of the old, still clung to the votaries of the new system; but there was an obvious tendency in the younger generation to use to the full, if not to abuse, the facilities which oil painting—once acquired—naturally afford.

The heart of Venice, at the close of the fifteenth century, was the Piazza di Rialto, where the business of the day was done by citizens, patricians and foreign merchants.* On the right side of the Piazza, by the

* *Shylock*, "What news on the Rialto?"—*Merch. of Ven.* act i. sc. 3. *Salanio*, "Now what news on the Rialto?"—*Merch. of Ven.* act iii. sc. i. Here is meant not the bridge, but the market-place of Rialto.

venerable church of San Jacopo, the privileged members of the mercantile and senatorial class met at noon, to talk politics and settle exchanges. On the left side of the Piazza, famous for the site of the stone from which sentences of outlawry were proclaimed, traders from abroad were allowed to congregate.* For the convenience of both, a colonnade served as a shelter from summer sun and winter rains, and a raised map of the world, as known to the geographers of the time, exhibited the paths of Venetian traffic.† Along the roadway countless booths of drapers displayed the cloths of Italian and Levantine manufacturers; above and within the colonnades were the counters of native merchants, bankers, and artificers, and schools of painting and music.‡ The close proximity of these schools explains how painters like Giorgione and Sebastian Luciani gained proficiency in the sister arts, and mastered at once the secrets of the lute and palet. It was a place necessarily familiar to all art-students, and one, we may believe, not unknown to Titian, whose teacher, Gentile Bellini, lived in the vicinity. In Rivoalto the house of this great man was situated,§ a house of note it would seem, not only because it was adorned with pictures and mosaics by Bellini himself, but because it sheltered a collection of antiques, well known to critics for containing a head of Plato and a statue of Venus by Praxiteles.‖

* Sansovino, Ven. desc. 363.

† Lorenzi, 81–82.

‡ Sansovino, 363.

§ See Gentile Bellini's will, which begins, "In noñ Dei . . . 1506 ñs febrii die 18 Ind. X R[ivoal]ti," in the Archivio Notarile at Venice.

‖ Compare the foregoing, and Pierio Valeriano, "De Marmoreo

It has been said by Vasari that Venetian craftsmen, having at this period no museums of antiques, were constrained to study from the model after the dry and timid manner of the day; and it is doubtless true that the "garden of the Medici" was not at hand to which boys could be sent to draw from the round. True it is also, as Vasari adds, that Titian at first applied the careful and minute habits of draughtsmanship which characterised the school of the Bellini.* But it is a mistake to say that the antique was unknown to the Venetians, and to affirm of Titian that he was unacquainted with the art of the Greeks, or heedless of the beauties of classic sculpture; for he was, on the contrary, a curious admirer of ancient bas-reliefs, and more than once we shall see an eager adapter of the works of the pagan time.

If we venture to apply our knowledge of the status of Venetian painters in the first half of the sixteenth century to illustrating that of their predecessors at the turn of the previous age, we realize a vague picture of the conditions under which artists formed their practice. Painting was the business of some great masters and of countless mediocrities. The rising generation was made up of youths of various means and prospects dependent on a public of unequal taste. For men of small pecuniary means the road to fortune was beset with difficulties. Some were obliged to eke out their existence by decorating

Platonis capite apud Bellinos Venetiis, & Raffaele Zovenzonio's epigram, "in Venerem Gentilis Bellini," in anon. ed. Morelli, 8vo, Bassano, 1800, pp. 193–4.

* Vasari, xiii. 18.

chairs and chests;* others finished panels on speculation, and exhibited them in the dealers' shops which lined the streets connecting the Piazza of St. Mark with the bridge of Rialto. In these streets, which went by the general name of the "Merceria," the main stream of traffic flowed; and a favourable place in a show window was coveted as a means of securing commissions.† But the taste of the Venetian public was not as yet trained to the appreciation of subjects of a domestic or homely character; and a steady demand could only be said to exist for pictures "devout, finished, and carefully wrought."‡ For the bolder sort of craftsmen who could face the difficulties of wall painting, another path was open. The Venetians were fond of decorated house fronts. The contract for building a house often enjoined its adornment with frescos, and a large palace in a conspicuous position might, if tastefully painted, secure to a young and able man a number of useful patrons. Yet it seldom happened that a direct connection united a painter to a wealthy patrician, and it frequently occurred that the architect employed at a low remuneration the labour of an artist, whose work was highly charged to the noble owner of the mansion.§

One of the earliest references to Titian professionally connects his name with the decoration of a house front. "Above the hall door, on the land side

* Ridolfi, Maraviglie, i. 321, 322, 328.

† Ridolfi, Maraviglie, ii. 177, 178.

‡ Ibid. i. 322.

§ Ibid. ii. 321.

of the Morosini palace in the Rio di San Canciano, there was a fresco of Hercules, said to be one of the very first works undertaken by Titian at Venice."* But Titian was also, at a very early period, a painter of Madonnas, and in these, as we shall presently observe, he unmistakeably displayed the carefulness and devout feeling peculiar to the older Venetian school.

There are few artists of whom we possess so many private letters as Titian, yet his epistolary correspondence gives less clue to his character than one might expect, because it is usually confined to business. We can only guess that he led in his youth the life of an apprentice, had his working days and holidays, and laboured honestly through the first in order fairly to earn the second. His father was probably not rich enough to give him the means of a trip home at festive seasons, but he may have visited Conte's cottage at Cadore before his name was heard amongst the higher circle of art patrons at Venice. Notwithstanding his well-known shrewdness and sharpness, there are signs of paternal affection and tenderness to his children to be gathered from his correspondence; and the genuine fondness of the father pre-supposes dutiful conduct in the son.† The lost portraits of Gregorio and Lucia Vecelli were, perhaps, painted during a visit to Cadore;‡ so also the damaged tempera

* Sansovino, Ven. desc. 391. The fresco is not now in existence.

† "Egli fu amorevolissimo verso i parenti." Tizianello's "Anonimo," p. 7.

‡ Orazione Panegirica, in Ticozzi, p. 321; and Ridolfi, Maraviglie, ii. 304. The portrait of Gregorio was preserved at Venice, that of Lucia in the Curtoni Col-

of the Virgin and Child between St. Roch and St. Sebastian in the Genova chapel at the Pieve; but as this is not a representative picture, inasmuch as it is doubtful whether it may not be in part by Francesco Vecelli, it escapes our grasp for the present, and leaves us to seek abroad for works of Titian's youth. In Venice, indeed, there is no lack of canvases which pass under that name, but a glance at the best of them—the "Passage of the Red Sea," in the Palazzo Reale, or the "Visitation," in the academy—will satisfy any critical student of the master that the nomenclature is wrong.* The true test of Titian's

lection at Verona. But the latter represented Titian's mother, not alone, but accompanied by a nephew. (Comp. Ridolfi, Marav. ii. 304; and Campori, Raccolta di Cataloghi, 8vo, Modena, 1870, p. 201.)

* *Venice*, Palazzo Reale. The Passage of the Red Sea, and its companion, "Christ in limbo," were not unknown to Boschini, who describes them (Ricche Miniere, 12mo, Venice, 1674, 2nd ed. Sestiere di San Marco, p. 18) as hanging in the ducal palace, in the passage leading from the "stanza del Collegio" to the Doge's chapel. At this time they were known as productions of the "school of Titian." After their removal to the Palazzo Reale, the "Christ" was assigned to Giorgione, and the Passage of the Red Sea to Titian. It has been shown (North It. Painting, ii. 212) that the first was probably executed by Pellegrino da San Daniele. There is every reason to believe that the second is by the same hand. It is a small canvas, with numerous diminutive figures of bold execution, but dimmed and injured by time, and of a general russet tone.

Venice Academy, No. 35. The Visitation, once in the Monastery of Sant' Andrea at Venice, is a canvas with large figures, the majority of which are injured beyond redemption. One of the heads, indeed (St. Joseph), is altogether new. The figures are designed with modern boldness, but the drawing is incorrect, especially in the hands and feet, and the heads are feeble in every sense; the colours, too, are sharp and out of focus. Considering the amount of cleaning, patching, and re-touching which this work has undergone, it is hard to say more than that it is in the manner of Del Piombo, rather than in that of Titian, though it is feebler than the works of either.

early form is to be found in a small Madonna at the Belvedere of Vienna, which throws considerable light on his first steps in art.

Here we find ourselves in presence of a style which takes us back to the fifteenth century at Venice, without recalling directly any one painter of the time. It reminds us of Bellini, Carpaccio, and Palma Vecchio, the general impression being that of an original work by one whose relation to a single master is not essentially marked. The infant Christ, standing all but naked on a parapet of stone, the Virgin behind the parapet holding a piece of lawn about his waist; behind her a grey wall, with a view of a landscape, partly interrupted by a curtain half striped silk, half green satin. This description might bring back to our mind numberless representations of a similar kind; but that we are more than usually struck by the homely roundness of the heads, the breadth of make, and fulness of shape in the Virgin and the Child. The man who thought out a group like this, though swayed by school traditions and conventionalisms, was clearly not yet master of the rules of selection. He copied with patient finish accidents of texture and pattern in stuffs; he drew and defined flesh forms with a correct eye for movement; he outlined and modelled with grace and polish, and gave a burnish to his surfaces which betrays a familiar habit of controlling the difficulties of technical execution, but he neither sought nor found an ideal type. Yet genuine feeling wells out here and there in freshness of conception and timid tenderness of

expression; in graceful motion and delicate subtleties, such as the child's hand laid on the fingers of its mother. The shape and proportions remind us of the old Venetian school. The cleanness and purity of contour and surface seem derived from the Bellini. The burnish and pearly bloom of the whole is Palmesque. But there is no attempt as yet to distinguish, by differences of grain and texture, the flesh, the vestments, and the ground. It is evidence of the steadiness which accompanies the development of Titian's genius that the form of the child is the prototype of that which was introduced a quarter of a century later in the grand altar-piece of the Casa Pesaro. Thus early, too, Titian paints a charming and appropriate landscape, one which recalling neither Venice nor Cadore takes us to the border country between both, where the hills are not broken into peaks, but sit low in a gauzy haze, overrun with gorse or underwood, topped here and there with farm-houses, or relieved by an elegant sapling. The undertone of this landscape is a mere rubbing of umber. The foreground, after the fashion of Giorgione, is enlivened by a soldier in a breast-plate sitting on the sward. An equable and tempered atmosphere covers the distance, but the nearer figures are bright as marble, and the youthful Titian already compasses an effect of light by a bold projection of shadow on the curtain behind his group. Accidental causes, such as a repainted sky and stonework, now exaggerate the contrast between the landscape and the figures, whilst they may account for the disap-

pearance of a cartello or scrip with the painter's name, which authenticates an old copy of this piece in the Museum of Rovigo.*

The very first steps of Titian are those of a master, whose nature it is to be original; for at the outset that which is merely imitative in him, is tempered by individual features. As he proceeds so he progresses; his originality is greater, and elements that may be called imitative fade into the background. Timid and cold at first, he soon warms to the task before him. His carefulness and finish remain, but the gifts of the colourist which gradually come into play, are the result of a firmer and more manly grasp of the causes to which are due the polish peculiar to Antonello, and the harmony attained in the works of Giovanni Bellini. We cannot affect to be able to distinguish at this period, the chronological sequence of the impressions made upon Titian by a growing insight into the mysteries of the art of the past in Venice, or a better knowledge of the technical subtle-

* Vienna Belvedere, 1st Floor, Ital. School, Room II. No. 41, wood, 2 ft. high, by 2 ft. 7 in. broad. This picture belonged to the collection of Archduke Leopold Wilhelm, at Brussels, in the seventeenth century. A copy of it, by Teniers, is in Windsor Castle. The sky and terrace wall are repainted. The glazes, unequally removed from the flesh, have made it spotty, and this is conspicuous in the parts about the Virgin's eyes. Joan Meyssen's engraving, published at Antwerp, bears the words, "Titianus pinx" on the window sill. The copy in the Rovigo Museum, signed, in a cartello on the wall to the left, "Titianus F." is probably the same canvas that, in 1845, formed part of the Barbarigo Collection at Venice. Compare Krafft, Hist. Krit. Katalog. der K. K. Gemäldo Gall. zu Wien, 8vo, Wien, 1854, p. 27; and Gian Carlo Bevilacqua's Insigne Pinacoteca Barbarigo della Terrazza, folio, 1845, p. 73. There is a photograph of the Vienna picture by Wawra.

ties of contemporary masters. It is hard to fix to a particular moment the fluctuating tendency to snatch something from Palma, or something from Giorgione. There is evidence only of this, that Palma seems constantly in Titian's eye; though it becomes clearer also at every moment, that the study of older styles is steadily tempered by independent feeling, and a constant reference to nature. In the rapid evolution of time, varying results appear on the surface. Here we find smoothness, polish and blending united to richness of tone in pictures remarkable for great uniformity of technical handling, there a mixture of the same handling with a bolder touch and an intentional variety of method in the production of grain. But independently of this, Titian soon soars beyond the limits which usually confine religious painting. He brings novelty of conception into a picture connected with some of the most conspicuous actions of the Venetian state in the opening years of the century; and he charms in a masterpiece, in which a tender and poetic veil is thrown round a subject capable of prurient and unpoetic treatment.

In purely ecclesiastical compositions, either half or full length, it is easy to trace the growth of Titian's power from its first beginnings to its development, at the time of the Paduan journey or the later connection with Ferrara. At the end of the vista in this direction, looms the grand Christ of "The Tribute Money," but it is hard to say in what year any one of these pictures was produced, and we must be content to know that they represent a current of thought often

interrupted, but always taken up afresh till the channel is full and the object worked out.

Reminiscent of the Virgin and Child at the Belvedere, which may be acknowledged as one of the most youthful of Titian's creations, the Madonna with the Child, the infant Baptist and two male saints in the same collection, strikes us as a production of a more mature time; and it is clear not only that years elapsed between the completion of the first and the designing of the second, but that we stand a good way on in the path leading up to the Christ of "The Tribute Money." Before this—and if genuine—evidence of a temporary approximation to Giorgione, is a picture in the "Scuola di San Rocco" at Venice, which represents the "Man of Sorrows."

The subject embodied in this canvas is perhaps more essentially Venetian than any other. It was a favourite with Antonello, who repeated it at different times with realistic force, but it had been treated hitherto with a view to displaying the outward sign of suffering rather than the inward resignation to pain. Here the Redeemer is presented as truly sorrowing; his face inclined, his arms folded over each other. The writhing common to the Paduans and Flemings, is avoided, as being below the ideal of sixteenth century art. A large form, a spacious chest, are natural accompaniments of a square and bony head, to which a broad, short, nose, and a fleshy mouth give a special impress; but the type is noble and characteristic of that period of Venetian painting, which closed, so to speak, with Giovanni Bellini's Madonna of 1503, in

San Zaccaria at Venice. The only contrast which shows to positive disadvantage is that of a long skinny arm and emaciated hand attached to a frame of supernatural scantling. We can picture to ourselves the curious industry of an artist who first painted from a corpse, and then gave life to the head by returning to the study of the living model. Such a device would naturally suggest itself to a youth striving for mastery. The handling also indicates that the painter was young and resolute, as well as patient and painstaking. But whereas in the Virgin and Child of the Belvedere, the colours are applied to produce a solid enamel, they are laid in here with surprising spareness, varying from mere rubbings to substantial strata, but never pastose, though carefully harmonized by filmy glazings and delicate blending. A warm and liquid general tone is given by clear but coloured lights merging through cool half tints into darker livids; a surface the reverse of metallic is broken by patches of livid grey in the hollows beneath the eyes, varied by spots of bright cherry in the reflexes of the lips, or of crimson in the wounds of the brow and side; flesh is relieved by shadow skilfully modified with brown touches, where copious frizzled hair of great fineness escapes from beneath the crown of green thorns, and falls in masses on the shoulders. Vasari notes in an early portrait by Titian, which has not been preserved, this distinct manner of painting subtle hair; he praises too the finish and minuteness of detail, which are also characteristic of the "Man of Sorrows," and makes it in this respect hardly less

remarkable than the Christ of "The Tribute Money."* At the time when Titian might be supposed capable of attempting a work of this kind, the brethren of San Rocco occupied a temporary building on the site of the present "Scuola."† But when that edifice was founded in 1517, and when later, the name of Tintoretto began to overshadow every other, the painter of the "Man of Sorrows" sank into such complete oblivion, that his work was lost amongst the "unknown," to which it is even now consigned.

Yet it was not unnatural that Titian, as a youth, should have laboured for San Rocco in a style reminiscent of Giorgione. He is said to have subsequently composed for the same fraternity the "Christ carrying his Cross," which now bears his name on the altar of a side chapel in the church of San Rocco; and this remarkable picture, which was also executed before the erection of the "School" in 1517, was first admired for its beauty, and then worshipped for the miracles it performed; it is well-known, indeed, that the offerings made before it were the source of the fortune which enabled the brethren to re-build their place of meeting.‡ Yet at a period when people must have been in a condition to know the men to whom celebrated masterpieces were assigned, Vasari came to Venice, and hesitated whether he should attribute the miraculous Christ of San Rocco

* Vasari, xiii. 20.

† Compare Zanotto (F.), Nuovissima guida di Venezia, 12mo, Ven. 1863, p. 444, with Sansovino, Ven. desc., pp. 287, 288.

‡ Sansovino, Ven. desc. 288, and Vasari, xiii. 26.

to Titian or Giorgione, and we actually find it ascribed in his Lives to each of these painters in turn.* Was it simply negligence on Vasari's part that he should have committed this error, or was it that he could not really distinguish the work of each master? He certainly confessed some doubt as to other pieces by Titian. Concerning this of San Rocco, we may well be puzzled, since his judgment is impaired by the wear of years, and the fatal arts of restorers. Yet the picture, even in its present bad condition, is still imposing. It has lost its coloured glazings, and part of the body of its flesh tints, but it preserves a grand balance of light and shade, and displays the spirited touch of an artist not inferior in any sense to Giorgione. In one respect, and one only, we may note a blemish pointing to the comparative inexperience of Titian. Of four figures in the canvas, two at the sides are spectators, one to the right in the gloom of the background, one to the left more clearly brought forward. Between the two a grim executioner drags Christ with a cord as he bends to the load of the cross, and Christ is majestically prominent as he turns a noble face in concentrated light towards the spectators. But matchless form and serene expression, such as we meet with here, hardly blind us to a certain disproportion in the size of the head as compared with that of the surrounding actors in the scene; and this fault is attributable not to a man in his prime as Giorgione must have been, but to the

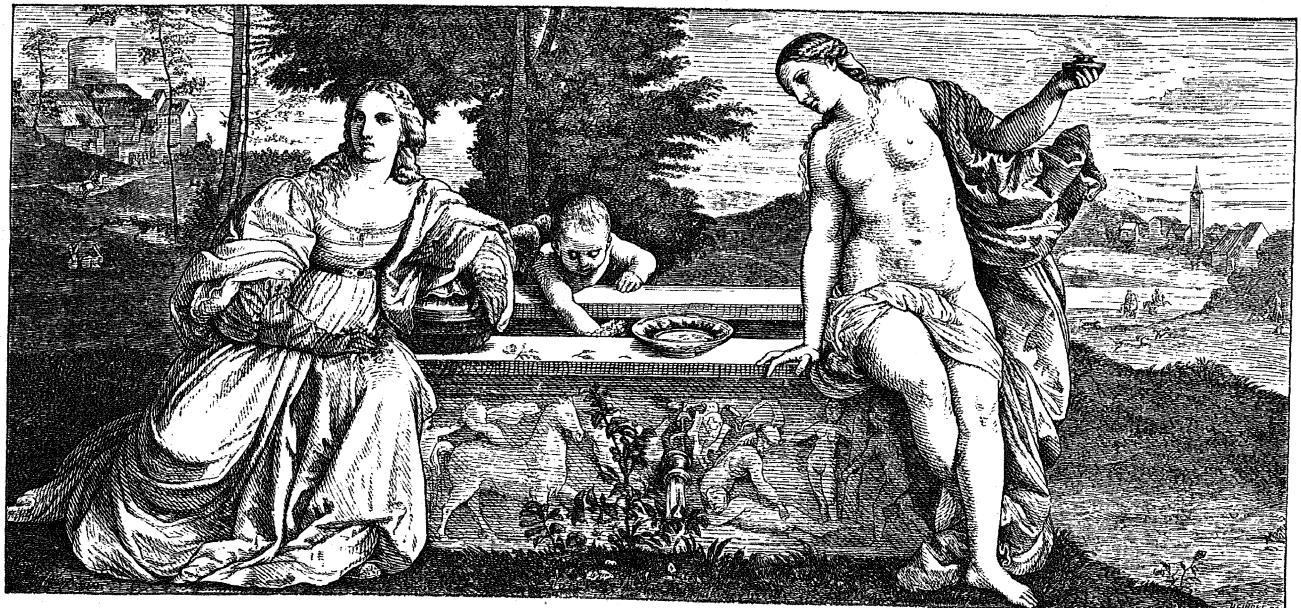
* Vasari, vii. 85, and xiii. 26. But Tizianello's "Anonimo" ascribes the picture (p. ix.) to Titian.

inexperience of a master forgetting in the eagerness of his youth one of the rules of composition. Independently of this defect, the picture is executed with the care which distinguished Giorgione, with a mastery and breadth, yet with a spareness of impast, essentially Giorgionesque, and with a delicacy in modelling and blending, which reveal great technical skill united to a studious observation of nature.

But here again we are carried on, as we trace the career of a versatile painter, beyond the days of his youth. Granted that he produced the pictures of San Rocco, we must concede first that he finished the "Christ carrying his Cross" after the "Man of Sorrows;" next, that when painting these pieces in a Giorgionesque form, he was also painting other things in a form not Giorgione's. But this need not create surprise, for Titian's genius was so vast, and so comprehensive, as to require extraordinary modes of expansion; and his later works afford innumerable proofs of an enviable power to execute at one time pictures technically different in handling.

Ridolfi's "Maraviglie," published for the first time at Venice in 1648, contains a description of Titian's "Two Maidens at a Fountain" in the palace of Prince Borghese at Rome.* It was probably recognized in earlier days as a masterpiece, marking a period in the growth of Venetian art; yet the precise date of its completion, and the title of its original owner, are both unrecorded, and the patron's arms

* Ridolfi, Marav. i. 257.



ARTLESS AND SATED LOVE. BORGHESE PALACE, ROME.

[*Vol. I., p.* 62.

emblazoned on the picture still remain undeciphered.* The vague name of "Sacred and Profane Love," which clings to this allegory, poorly expresses the contrast of "Artless and Sated Love." The scene is laid in a pleasure ground surrounded by landscape, swathed in the balmy atmosphere of an autumnal evening. A warm glow is shed over hill, dale, and shore, and streaks of grey cloud alternate with bands of light in a sunset sky. To the right in the distance, a church on an island and a clump of cottages on a bend of land, bathed by the waters of the sea; and two horsemen on a road watch their hounds coursing a hare. To the left a block of buildings, and a tower half illumined by a ray of sun crown the hill-side, where a knight with his lance rides to meet a knot of villagers. Nearer to the foreground, and at measured intervals, saplings throw their branches lightly on the sky, which, nearer still, is intercepted in the centre of the space by a group of rich-leaved trees, rising fan-like behind the marble trough of an antique fountain. Enchanting lines of hill and plain, here in shadow, there in light, lead us to the foreground where the women sit on a lawn, watered by the stream that issues from the fountain, and rich in weeds that shoot forked leaves and spikes out of the grass. Artless Love on one side, leans, half-sitting, on the ledge of the trough, a crystal dish at her side, symbolizing her thoughts. Her naked figure, slightly veiled

* A shield, with a monster bound down by a sash, the head and forefeet those of a rampant lion, the hinder part like the tail of some fish-like animal.

by a length of muslin, is relieved upon a silken cloth hanging across the arm, and helping to display a form of faultless shape and complexion. The left hand holds aloft the vase and emblematic incense of love; the right, resting on the ledge, supports the frame as the maiden turns, with happy earnestness, to gaze at her companion. She neither knows nor cares to heed that Cupid is leaning over the hinder ledge of the fountain, and plashing in the water. Sated Love sits to the left, her back resolutely turned towards Cupid, her face determined, haughty, but serene; her charms veiled in splendid dress, her very hands concealed in gloves. A more graphic revelation of the thought embodied in the allegory can scarcely be conceived; but lest the coarse sense of man should fail to decipher the painter's meaning, a bas-relief in the fountain wall shows a genius whipping the god of love out of his sleep; a shepherd in a meadow gives his maiden the kiss of betrothal, conies sport on the grass, and two butterflies flutter over a flower. Again a plucked rose fades unheeded by the sated one's side, and a lute lies silent under her elbow. We forget, while gazing at this figure, that the painter has not explained the manner of her sitting; we scarcely notice the faulty drawing of the hand. She seems so grand in her lawns and silks; her bosom is fringed with such delicate cambric; her waist and skirt so finely draped in satin of grey reflexes; the red girdle with its jewelled clasp, the rich armlets, the bunch of roses in her gloved hand, all harmonize so perfectly. Not without coquetry,

or taste for sparkling colour, the chestnut hair of the naked maiden is twisted in a rose-coloured veil; the cloth at her loins is of that golden white which sets off so well the still more golden whiteness of her skin. The red silk falling from her arm, and partly waving in the air, is of that crimson tone which takes such wonderful carminated changes in the modulations of its surface, and brings out by its breaks the more uniform pearl of the flesh.*

What history has forgotten to record of Titian's early associations and studies stands revealed in this beautiful creation of his pencil. When he composed this piece he was young indeed, but past the ordeal of the schools, skilled as a composer, but not less conspicuous for taste as a colourist than studious of pagan art and familiar with Nature. Nature in fact was always preferred by Titian before all else. It may be true and would perhaps be a just reproach upon his skill that knowing so much of the antique as he did, he should not have tried to revive the ideal peculiar to the Greeks; but in all the changes of his art, and even at the time of the beautiful "Venus of Pardo," he preferred the seductive grace of Nature to the more elevated but more statuesque perfection of the Florentine School. He never was above appropriating and applying that which he found good in others, but he did so for the sake of assimilation rather than for purposes of imitation, and he was in this sense altogether his own master. His

* This picture is well preserved. The figures are just under life-size. A photograph has been taken by Alinari from the original.

deep acquaintance with the works of the Bellini, Antonello and Carpaccio is perfectly clear to our mind, equally so his knowledge of Greek sculpture, but what he acquired from them he purified by constant comparison with nature; and he formed by this means a style original in thought and new in technical treatment. Titian stands in no relation to any of his predecessors as Raphael to Perugino. In Raphael we always discern the pupil of one master. In his grandest moments he is never so far transfigured as to deny his teacher. Titian's style is the outcome of the art of Venice as it rose to perfection under different artists in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. We cannot say that he is ever the direct disciple of any single craftsman. But in the picture of the Borghese Palace as in the votive altarpiece of the bishop of Paphos at Antwerp which immediately follows it, the man to whom he shows most affinity is Palma Vecchio, and this remark applies not only to technical handling but to mould of form and drapery and even to typical models of faces. Palma's earliest extant picture is that of Mr. Reiset in Paris, which bears the date of 1500. It was done about the time of "Artless and Sated Love," and betrays a more experienced hand; but few will be found to prefer the work of Palma to that of Titian. "Artless and Sated Love" is the first fruit of the period which produced the bacchanal at Madrid, and the Ariadne of the National Gallery; but the types of the faces are unmistakably related to those of Palma's Violante at Vienna, and the "Bella di Tiziano" in the Sciarra Palace at

Rome. The binding of the hair, the fashion of the dress, the cenerine scales of tone in modelling are Palmesque; and in all these points of general resemblance we may trace the source of the story which makes Titian in love with Palma's daughter, and the tendency of modern critics to confound the works of one painter with those of his more experienced contemporary.*

As a colourist and landscape painter, Titian cannot as yet be said to have reached the level of Giorgione; and "the Maidens" of the Borghese palace will not bear comparison with the Madonna of Castelfranco; but the race between the rivals is already very close, and we feel that Titian may run Giorgione harder than he would like. One thing remains worthy of special mention. It is characteristic of the Borghese picture, that the scene is laid in the idyllic lowlands of the Venetian provinces and not in the neighbourhood of the dolomites of Cadore; and we might infer that the Alpine land of Titian's birth had not left that impress on the master's mind in early years which is clearly observable in the frescoes of Padua. Yet a man of Titian's feeling and fibre might hesitate to give to a warm and poetic subject the inappropriate foil of a nature sublime indeed and full of grandeur, but ill suited to the display of beauty in an allegorical undress.

But it is time to connect the form of Titian as it looms before us in the distance of centuries, with the

* Let us note once more—the Bella di Tiziano at the Sciarra Palace is assigned to Titian, but painted by Palma Vecchio.

period in which these first creations of his brush were finished; and as we do so we remember that the days were trying ones for the name and reputation of Venice, and that troubles of no common kind were disturbing the peace of Italy. We saw with what fatal certainty the Venetian State was losing the pledges of her supremacy in the Levantine seas. Did her statesmen believe that the loss of these pledges could ever be retrieved? Did they think them capable of being compensated by extension of territory in Italy? Could they seriously hope to wield permanent command in Pisa or on the coast of Apulia whilst they lay at the mercy of invasions from all points of the compass by powers full of the strength of a growing and compact nationality? They must have been well aware at the close of the 15th century that their existence was conditional on the cunning with which they might be able to contract alliances; and this is all but proved by the fact that they learnt to exercise this cunning with less regard to public morality than their neighbours, but with a depth of astuteness, so treacherous and unfathomable at times as to furnish the semblance of real power. In 1495 they joined the Pope, the Emperor, the King of Spain, and the Dukes of Milan, Ferrara, and Bologna, to foil Charles the Eighth. In 1498 they leagued with France against Naples and Milan, for the purpose of striking at the Turks and acquiring the frontier of the Adda. Their success on land in the years that followed was limited by the victories of France, which at first were brilliant, but this was more than counter-

balanced by defeats abroad and at sea, which gave the finishing stroke to their power in the East. What interests us here more than the gain of a fortress or the loss of a fleet to Venice, is the part taken in negotiations and war by persons with whom Titian had relations. It has been hinted that Titian was not unknown at this time to the court of Lodovico Sforza, but this is not certain.* He was more surely connected with the Pesari, who were friends of the Borgias, and whose fortunes wavered with the chances of the republic in its struggle against the Turks. At the court of Constantinople, Venice usually kept an agent; but there were numerous States besides, ready to intrigue with the Sultan if they thought they could bring his fierce janizaries or his dreaded galleys with advantage to themselves against their neighbours. It is perhaps needless to remark, that in a political age affected by no scruples, it was not considered more derogatory to His Most Christian Majesty to invite the aid of Mussulmen against Christians, than to the Pope to point out to the foe of Christendom how he might injure a Christian principality. In 1494, Alfonso of Naples sent to offer Bajazet Otranto and Brindisi, if he would attack Scio and separate the Genoese from the French.† The Florentines, in 1497, acting for themselves as well as for others, offered the Sultan 50,000

* MS. notes by E. Cicogna to Tizianello's anonymous Life of Titian. MS. in the Seminario at Venice.

† Domenico Malipiero's Annali Veneti, part 1, p. 144, in Archivio Storico, tom. vii. 8vo, Fir. 1843.

ducats to attack Venice.* Prior to the invasion of Italy by Louis the Twelfth, Lodovico Moro persuaded Alexander the Sixth to send an ambassador to Bajazet telling him that Venice was in league with France, and might become the mistress of Italy; and it was owing to the diplomacy of Venice that this intrigue was discovered, and Alexander was brought round to the alliance of France.† In consequence of this accord, the Borgias set about acquiring influence at Venice, with the hope of finding favour for their plans of private aggrandizement. It was not enough that Louis the Twelfth should have given Cæsar Borgia the hand of a French princess with the title of Duke, and the right to carve a principality out of the Romagna; it was equally important that Venice should countenance an attack on Pesaro, Faenza and Rimini. There was perhaps little chance of such countenance in July of 1499, when Antonio Grimani was sent out with a fleet to meet the Turkish squadron on the coast of Greece, and the French monarch advanced to the conquest of Lombardy; but in August, after Grimani's defeat near Lepanto, Venice was very deeply humiliated, and it is related of Louis the Twelfth, that he told Loredano the Venetians were clever and wealthy, but of small heart, and fearful of death, whilst the French fought to conquer or die.‡ It was when smarting under these losses and reproofs that Venice was visited by

* Domenico Malipiero's Annali Veneti, part 1, p. 159.

† Ibid. 163.

‡ Malipiero, 183.

Cæsar Borgia, who was received by the Doge and Senate at San Biagio Cataldo on the 11th of September. His demands were Ferrara, Imola, Forli Bertinoro, Pesaro, and Rimini, for the Pope; and the senate was so perplexed for an answer that it took eleven days to deliberate. Then however the Doge Agostino Barbarigo spoke the verdict of the sages, and said the Borgias might take Pesaro if they could, but Ferrara and Rimini never. Cæsar was fain to be content with this reply.* He attended a gorgeous ceremony on the 24th of September, when the Standard of Venice was given to Marchio Trevisani on his appointment to supersede Antonio Grimani; and it must have been a curious spectacle to see the son of a Pope married to a princess of Navarre, acting as legate *a latere* to his father, and after high mass in the robes of a cardinal, offer plenary indulgence to the Venetian people to join a Crusade against the Moslems.† As he left the lagoons with three hundred horse for Padua the scandal mongers of the city accused his servants of stealing the arras and gold worked curtains, as well as the sheets and quilts in their official residence, and Cæsar himself was charged with robbing the high altar of a Muranese Church of a costly tablecloth.‡ Whether Cæsar at this time was induced to sit to Titian for his likeness cannot be affirmed with certainty, but there is a tradition that he did so; and Charles the First of England is known to have possessed a portrait of Cæsar on one

* Malipiero, 564–565. † Ibid. 180–181. ‡ Ibid. 565.

canvas with Alexander the Sixth.* Borgia was a man of too much cleverness and conscious of too much support not to have known how to make friends in a place like Venice; and there is every reason to believe that he found numerous partisans amongst the patricians of that city. When Angelo Leonini came next spring as legate from the Pope to urge anew the claims of Alexander, he was fearlessly accompanied to the council by the chiefs of several noble families; and with their countenance he passionately renewed the demands of the Borgias.†

Marchio Trevisani had shared the fate of Antonio Grimani, and lost a battle to the Turks in 1500, but still Barbarigo remained unmoved. He sternly refused to Leonini what he had not yielded to Cæsar Borgia, sent for aid to the Emperor, to Rhodes and Portugal; and at last, in April, 1501, concluded a solemn league with Alexander the Sixth and Ladislaus of Hungary to fight the Sultan. On the 8th of April, Father Raphael, an itinerant friar and popular speaker, preached the Crusade on the Piazza of St. Mark before 50,000 people. He repeated the

* Amongst the pictures belonging to Charles I. at Wimbledon and Greenwich, one catalogued by Bathoe (Catalogue of Charles I.'s Coll., fol. London, 1757, p. 3) was "Pope Alexander and Cæsar Borgia, done by Titian." In the Radnor Collection at Longford Castle, No. 138 is a portrait of a man to the knees, his left hand in his girdle, his right on a wall, on the face of which are the words, "AÑO ÆTATIS SVÆ XXXI." The treatment of this picture betrays an artist of the late Venetian school, whose manner is related to that of the Bassanos, yet it bears the name of Cæsar Borgia, and is assigned to Titian.

† May 24, 1500. Marin Sanut Diarii MS. in Cicogna, Iscr. Ven., folio, Venice, 1824–53, vi. p. 16.

sermon and published the Bull on the 13th, and immediately after Jacopo da Pesaro, a Venetian prelate, was appointed by a Papal Bull legate of the Holy See, and commander of twenty Papal galleys.*

The Pesari were powerful nobles at Venice at the opening of the sixteenth century. Benedetto Pesaro was chosen to command the Venetian fleet at the fall of Modon after the death of a broken heart of Marchio Trevisano.† He died in the spring of 1503 at Corfu, after news had reached him that Venice had ceded the Morea to Bajazet the Second, and he left his relative Jacopo to return home to boast of the capture of Santa Maura.‡ Jacopo was one of those patricians whose entrance into orders precluded them from employment under the Venetian government. He soothed his ambition by purchasing dignities abroad. Born in 1460 he became titular bishop of Paphos in Cyprus, from which he took the nickname of "Baffo."§ He was made keeper of the Clementine Bull at Venice in 1530; and his great age,

* Marin Sanuto in Cicogna, Isc. Ven. ii. 120, and Sansovino, Ven. desc., p. 189.

† Sansovino, Ven. desc. Chronicon, p. 54.

‡ Petri Bembi, Hist. Ven., liber vi. p. 140, ed. of Bâle, 1556.

§ "Laùdò (Paolo Capello's Relazione before the Venetian Senate in 1500) li nostri prelati . . . messer Jacopo da Pesaro, vescovo di Baffo." Relazioni degli Ambasc. Veneti, by Alberi, 8vo, Flor. vol. vii. p. 12. On Jacopo Pesaro's tomb we find his death recorded April, 1547, with the significant addition, "Vixit annos platonicos." Giovanni della Casa, in a letter to Cardinal Farnese, Dec. 17, 1545, says: "Bapho è di età di 84 anni." See the letter in Ronchini (Amadio), Lettere d'uomini illustri, 8vo, Parma, 1853, p. 142.

which clouded an intellect distinguished in its time for acuteness, was the only cause which prevented his being sent in 1545 to the Council of Trent.*

To persons acquainted with Venice the name of Pesaro will be connected with that of Titian by the splendid altarpiece of the Frari, in which the bishop of Paphos is represented kneeling before the Virgin, whilst an armed knight unfurls the standard of the Borgia. But at a much earlier period of "Baffo's" career, and probably at the very moment when the favour of Alexander the Sixth enabled him to take command of a squadron against the Turks, he caused Titian to paint his likeness in adoration before the majesty of St. Peter. During the reign of Charles the First of England, this picture was part of the furniture of a private room in the palace of Whitehall. It passed after the revolution with many other works of art into Spain.† At Villa Viciosa, in San Pasquale, and in the Palace of Madrid, it was seen at various times by Conca and Mengs.‡ William the First, king of the Netherlands, presented it in 1825 to the municipality of Antwerp.§ Though soiled by travel and skinned by cleaning it has survived a very thorough process of repainting, which seriously affects the harmony of the colours; but we may still discern

* Ronchini, Lettere, *u. s.*, and Cicogna, Isc. Ven. iii. 269.

† Bathoe's Catalogue, p. 96.

‡ Conca (A.), Descriz. Odeporica della Spagna, Parma, 1793, i. 177. Waagen, Treasures of Art in Great Britain, 8vo, London, 1854, ii. 479—480.

§ Antwerp Catalogue of 1852, p. 72.

beneath the scumbles of the restorer the primitive beauty of the design and the clever facility of the handling. "Baffo" kneels with the banner of the Borgias in his hand before the throne of St. Peter. His dress is that of a Dominican, but the helmet of a knight lies before him, and proclaims his promotion to a military command. The figure of Alexander the Sixth in full pontificals, bending to recommend him to the apostle, tells of the protection to which he owed his appointment, and the favour of the Holy See is suggested by St. Peter, who sits on a throne to the left, and gives the suppliant his blessing. In the distance to the right, the waters and forts of a military harbour in which galleys are at anchor complete the subject. On a tablet below the foreground the following quaint inscription is to be found:

RITRATTO DI VNO DI CA^{SA} PESARO
IN VENETIA CHE FV FATTO
GENERALE DI S^{TA} CHIESA
TITIANO F.

This remarkable work has been exhibited long enough in the Museum of Antwerp to enable critics to decide whether the kneeling Dominican really represents Jacopo Pesaro or not, and if so, whether he was portrayed before or after his expedition to the Ionian Islands. It is a moot question whether the inscription on the tablet is as old as the time of Titian. Yet if we admit that it was written by the painter himself, which seems on the face of it improbable, we must logically believe that the panel was

executed some time after the event which it is intended to record. There is no doubt that the kneeling Dominican is, in truth, Jacopo Pesaro, because of his striking likeness to the "Baffo" of the altarpiece at the Frari; nor is it less clear that the painter is Titian, since, in spite of abrasion and retouching, the treatment is evidently the same as that of the allegory in the Borghese Palace. But it is equally apparent that the picture cannot be dated later than 1503—because the age of Pesaro, as he kneels before St. Peter, is that of a man between forty and forty-three; and Alexander the Sixth, abhorred as he was by all classes of Italians, would scarcely have been introduced into any picture after his death on the 18th of August, 1503. The style, too, in which the whole piece was executed, though more hasty than that of the Borghese allegory, just displays so much additional skill and facility of hand as might be expected from the enlarged experience of one or two years subsequent to the production of that work, whilst it still exhibits the comparative imperfection of an art which requires time and leisure to ripen. The portraits, indeed, may be pronounced masterly, but the form of St. Peter is neither as grand nor as manly as Titian would have made it a few years later; and apart from their intrinsic interest, the details of the saint's throne and its carved circular plinth are such as would only occur to an artist of unfinished education. The painter of "Artless and Sated Love," seeing the pleasing effect of a bas-relief imitating Greek marble sculpture, would easily fall into the mistake—as he does here—of ap-

plying the same ornament to the throne of St. Peter; but a more mature judgment would have told him that an altar sacred to Eros and incidents arising out of the passion of love were not fit for the seat of the first of the apostles. Their introduction into such a place shows Titian to have been an admirer of the antique, but not as yet the subtle craftsman who subsequently became so familiar with the end and purpose for which acquaintance with classic sculpture was encouraged in Tuscany. It is not certain that the panel has preserved its original size, but even this hardly explains why St. Peter should sit with so little majesty in a narrow corner. He rests his left hand on the Gospel, whilst he gives the blessing with his right—a studied attitude, with studied gesture and drapery to match, but the forms are reminiscent of the fourteenth century, and recall Carpaccio and Bellini, without revealing as much original power as we find elsewhere; and it would almost seem as if the wish to preserve an old and well-known type had paralyzed, to some extent, the youthful master's hand. There is nothing so generally admitted by critics of Venetian art as the grave and "senatorial" dignity imparted to portraits by Venetian painters. Here we have two forms of portrait. We have Pesaro from life; the attitude, the action of the hands, the raised head with its determined expression of lip and eye, reproduced with surprising truth and considerable fire. We also have Alexander the Sixth idealized as a saint, younger than he could possibly have appeared at the time of the action, and probably

taken from a portrait. Yet such is the skill of the artist in reproducing the modulations of nature, that we can scarcely believe that it was not flesh and blood from which he painted. But again—as at Vienna and at Rome—so here the preponderant influence appears to be the influence of Palma Vecchio, which shows itself diversely in the form and treatment of drapery, in the blurred grain of skin contrasted with broad touch and brushwork in stuffs, and in scales of tints. Palmesque alike are the changes of warm fair lights to breaks of silver grey, merging into livid brown, and the careful blending of pigments of fluid texture. Equally prominent and striking are points of resemblance with the allegory of the Borghese Palace, such as the tones of whites and reds, the gloves, and defective drawing in the hands. True balance in harmonies, atmosphere, and grand lines of landscape distance are qualities which we never look for in Titian's pictures in vain.* In this way Titian, step by step, creeps up to the front, and with a large reserve of power behind him, inaugurates a new period, and founds upon the older edifice of fifteenth-century art a new style. He may not have acquired

* Antwerp Museum, No. 357, wood, 1m·45 h., by 1m·83. When this picture was in Charles I.'s collection, it was 4 ft. 9 in. by 5 ft. 11 in. It seems therefore to have lost some inches of its height. The head, including the beard and hair of St. Peter, is much injured by re-painting, and the mantle, originally yellow, is now of a russet green tone. The sky has been damaged by streaks of yellow paint in the lighter parts. A copy, almost contemporary with the picture itself, may be seen on canvas in the Casa Lazara at Padua.

up to this point the solid perfection of the Bellini, or the polish of Palma and Giorgione, but he is all but free from every archaism of the previous age, and he gives better promise than any painter of the time, Giorgione and Palma not excepted.

CHAPTER IV.

The Fondaco de' Tedeschi, and its History.—Girolamo Tedesco and Scarpagnini.—Frescos of Titian at the Fondaco, compared with those of Giorgione.—The Vecelli at Venice and Cadore.—Francesco Vecelli.—Wars of the League.—Battle of Cadore.—Effects of the War on Artists.—Progress of Venetian Art.—Influence of Dürer.—Titian's Manner.—Madonnas at Vienna, the Louvre, and the Uffizi.—Virgin and St. Bridget at Madrid.—Virgin of Burleigh House.—Doges' Portraits not from Life.—Christ of the Tribute Money.—Titian's visit to Padua; he consorts with Campagnola.—Cornaro Palace.—Triumph of Faith.—Frescos of the Carmine and Santo at Padua.—Titian at Vicenza.—He returns to Venice.

No period of Titian's life has been more completely neglected by Venetian historians than that which intervenes between his apprenticeship under Zuccato and the days of his matriculation, yet it is doubtful whether we know less of this period than of that which immediately follows it; and the competition of Titian and Giorgione at the Fondaco de' Tedeschi, though decisive as to the career of both, is still involved in great obscurity. The Fondaco is now a public office lying east of the Rialto bridge on the grand canal. In its primitive form it was a dwelling house reserved for the "tribunes of the island of Rialto," but as far back as the opening of the thirteenth century it had been turned into a "tavern" for the use of German merchants.* Records of 1228 already

* Theodor Elze, History of the Fondaco in the "Ausland" for 1870, folio, Augsburg, No. 27.

describe it as a government building kept exclusively for the benefit of foreigners, the name of German or "Teutonicus" covering at that time the various nationalities of Germany proper, Savoy, Bohemia, Hungary and Poland.* To the natives of these distant countries the right of exclusive residence in the Fondaco was absolutely conceded, but the right was counterbalanced by equivalent restraints, and Germans were not allowed to reside or to trade in any place but the Fondaco.† We might fancy that under such stringent rules as these, the German community would be allowed to administer its own concerns, but the Venetian government was far too jealous of its power and too suspicious of fraud to grant such a privilege; and, prior to the sixteenth century, the police of the Fondaco was in the hands of three vice-domini and their subalterns, whose care descended to the furnishing of cooking utensils, and wine for the use of the inmates.‡ There was not a man in the Fondaco besides the traders who was not a paid official or spy of the government.§ The packers, weighers, brokers, and auctioneers, were all appointed by the state; *à fortiori*, the notaries, clerks, and servants of the vice-domini. An important officer was the steward, who gave the merchant his

* Capitolare dei Visdomini del Fontego dei Todeschi in Venezia, ed. Dr. G. Thomas, folio, Berlin, 1874, pp. 137, 227. Felix Fabri, the Dominican, who left Ulm in 1480 for the Holy Land, was lodged at Venice in the Fondaco. He says (Fratr. Felicis Fabri Evagatorium, 1480, ed. C. D. Hassler, 8vo, Stuttgardt, 1843, iii. p. 407), "Tabernas non habent, nisi quas pro Teutonicis et Sclavis et Vadienis et scortis sustinent."

† Capitolare, pp. 31, 78, 228.

‡ Ibid. pp. 48, 120.

§ Ibid. 79—80, 231.

room and magazine, and took charge of the arms and ammunition which he carried for defence on his journey and surrendered on his arrival at Venice.* Equally important as a class were the brokers (*messeti or sensali*), of whom there were thirty at the disposal of strangers. But no person was allowed to select his own broker. The names of these officers were put into a hat, and one or two were chosen out of a given number by lot from the hat.† Between the broker and the merchant there was a constant relation; because the latter was bound to do business through the former, who controlled and registered as well as negotiated sales. The broker always accompanied his client when he bought merchandise, and the merchant was precluded from buying from any but born Venetians.‡

The interest which this question of m rcantile brokerage excites is greatly increased for the historian of art by the knowledge that the broker's office, being in the gift of the government, was frequently conferred on painters; but it is clear, though we have no distinct proof of the fact, that towards the close of the fifteenth century these appointments were often either sinecures or transferable.§ The real holder probably

* Capit. 84, 145, 165; and Wilhelm Heyd's "Das Haus der Deutschen Kaufleute, in Venedig, in Sybel's Historische Zeitschrift," for 1874, 4tes Heft.

† Capitolare, p. 94.

‡ Pp. 90, 92, 98, 103, 144.

§ Some allusion to the performance of the duties of a broker by proxy may be found in the Capitolare of the Fondaco, under date of the 26th of Sept. 1475, Capit. p. 232. Of brokers who did no business at all we have the following, MCCC. die Aug. . . . "da zerto tempo in qua [è] sta electi Sanseri in fontego, de i qual tal non ha la lengua Todescha, tal son in decrepita eta e tal non se exercita per non saver far Sansaria, per modo zercha la mita de essi sanseri non se ex-

farmed out the office; and we know that Bellini and Titian were both brokers in the Fondaco, though it is plain that they performed none of the duties of the fraternity.

The offices of the Fondaco were only separated from the Rialto by the wooden bridge of that name. But the Fondaco, as it now stands, is not the building which existed in the fifteenth century. An older edifice, of smaller dimensions on a narrower site, was burnt down with loss of life and treasure on the 28th of January, 1505.* Immediately after the disaster great difficulty was encountered in regulating the sale and purchase of German goods, but measures were quickly taken by Francesco de' Garzoni, at that time commissioner of the Salt-office, to rebuild the Fondaco, and it was found practicable to give temporary accommodation to the merchants in the "Loggie" of Rialto, whilst the Visdomini were transferred to the hired palace of the Lippomano family. Meanwhile new land was bought by the Venetian government;† competition was invited for models of a new edifice, and plans were sent in by two artists of name,—Giorgio Spavento, then city architect and "proto," and Girolamo Todesco, a German, favoured for his skill as well as for his

ercita in Sanseria . . ." Capitolare, p. 247. The brokers who practised were paid at a certain rate per cent. on all they sold.—Ibid. pp. 267, 268.

* Morelli's Anonimo, with annot. by E. Cicogna in the library of St. Mark, contains a memorandum in MS. by Signor Francesco Lazzari, from which this and other facts and dates respecting the Fondaco are extracted.

† Leonardo Loredano to the Council of Nüremberg, Dec. 6, 1508, in Heyd, *u. s.*, p. 218.

nationality by his countrymen. For some time it was dubious which of the plans would be accepted. The question was settled in June by a decree of the Senate, "in Pregadi," declaring substantially that it was advisable to yield to the pressing instances of the merchants, who preferred the model of their countryman, and so to adopt Girolamo's plan which, besides being perfect in design and distribution, was also most ingenious in its scheme of construction. It was made an absolute condition, on the other hand, that no marble and no carved or fret work should be introduced into the building, and thus the authorities were driven to the use of painting for adornments which might otherwise have been excluded in favour of architectural and sculptural decoration.*

On the 20th of June, 1505, two days after the issue of this decree, Alvise Emo succeeded Garzoni at the Salt-office and took the direction of the works at the Fondaco. His first care was to remove Girolamo Tedesco, who received an appointment in the artillery at Cattaro. He then made Antonio Scarpagnini general superintendent under the orders of Giorgio Spavento. Three hundred ducats a month were spent in one year by the Venetian government in laying the foundations and bringing up the walls to the first floor. The body of the edifice above

* Decree MS. of June 19, 1505, in the College of Pregadi, at Venice, the principal passage as follows: "Tuta volta che no se possi ussir più fuori in Canal grando cum li Scalini de le rive di quello è al presente la fondamenta . . . ne si possi in esso Fontego far cosa alcuna de marmoro, ne etiam lavoriero alcuno intagliato de Straforo over altro per alcun modo."

ground cost 600 ducats a month, all of which was drawn from the Salt-office.* The roof was begun on the 16th of May, 1507. Between that date and 1508 Giorgione, Morto da Feltre, and Titian were no doubt employed on the adornment of the outer faces. An altar was erected in May, 1508, in the court of the Fondaco, and at that altar a mass was sung in honour of the completion of the building.† It is on record that Giorgione's frescos were ordered to be valued on the 8th of November, 1508.‡ On the 18th of the following February, 1509, the Germans invited all the magnates to the palace to witness the mummery of a greased pig pursued by blinded men; but it was not till August that they were allowed to move into the lodgings which the palace contained. §

The Fondaco remains to this day a monument of the skill of Girolamo Todesco, and Giorgio Spavento. Its form was but partially altered in the present century by the substitution of embattled angles for the turrets, which gave a peculiar character to the corners on the grand canal.‖ In shape a parallelogram,

* Antonio "Tagliapietra" was appointed superintendent on the 16th of August, 1505. From that date till June 17, 1506, the monthly expenditure was 300 ducats, after that it was 600 ducats. An order of the College of Pregadi, dated July 29, 1506, decrees the purchase of the timber for the first floor. Sanuto records the beginning of roofing on May 15, 1507. MS. Lazzari, *u. s.*

† Sanuto: Diaries in Lazzari MS.

‡ The order of that date, and the valuation made on the 11th of the same month, are in Abbate Cadorin's Contributions to Gualandi's Memorie risguardanti le belle arti; 8vo, Bologna, 1840–5, ser. iii. pp. 90, 91.

§ Sanuto's Diaries and Records, in Lazzari, *u. s.*

‖ Selvatico (P.), Sulla architettura in Venezia, fol. 1847, p. 168.

its dark and weather-beaten walls still impress us with a look of gloomy massiveness, hardly diminished by the low archings of the porticos and coupled windows. A large portal in the southern face gives irregular access to a quadrangular cloistered court, with twenty arches at the basement and forty in the galleries of the upper floors. The lower area, comprising twenty-six warehouses, was inhabited by porters, bale-tiers, weighers, saddlers, and factors. The higher stories contained two halls and eighty rooms, let out to the merchants at rentals varying from ten ducats a year for the first and second to eight ducats for the third floor.* A fine landing-place projected into the grand canal, protected by a portico of five arches resting on six strong pillars. To the right, under the portico, the Visdomini had their offices: to the left lay the custom-house. The two turrets, removed about forty years ago from the corners overlooking the grand canal, gave a lightness and symmetry to the building of which we may deplore the loss. In one of these turrets a set of bells was hung, at the sound of which the merchants attending the exchange on the Piazza of Rialto, or employed in balancing their books, might be seen to leave their avocations to join in a common repast at noon.† The northern and smaller of the halls on the first floor was used as a dining-room in winter, and called Sala della Stua, from the large monumental stove which warmed it after the German fashion.

* T. Elze, *u. s.* † Ibid.

The southern hall, looking towards the Rialto bridge, and known as the Sala dell' Estate or delle Pitture, was a summer refectory of imposing proportions.* Both halls were decorated with appropriate splendour, the winter room with a gilded ceiling supported in the centre by a marble column; the summer room with a panelled ceiling inclosing monochromes of the virtues and heathen deities commissioned of Battista Franco in 1556.† In the former, previous to the Reformation, the vicar and chapter of the neighbouring church of S. Bartholomew usually said prayers on the eve of Epiphany Sunday, on the eve of New Year, and at Christmas. They came in solemn procession, and sang the Litany before a figure of the Redeemer.‡ Here, too, for three nights of carnival time the merchants kept open house, and received with plenteous hospitality the masks who streamed into the Fondaco.§ In the latter a noble collection of pictures and frescos was gradually formed, which made the Fondaco famous at last as a gallery of masterpieces by the best artists of the sixteenth century. To the left of the main entrance, and in the centre of the principal wall, was the Redeemer assigned to Titian, which still hangs in the Evangelical Church at Venice.‖ On the rest of

* T. Elze, *u. s.*

† 1556, 29 Mayo. Accordo con Battista de' Franchi pittor per dipingere la sofita della Sala. Cod. Svayer, No. 1190, in the library of St. Mark.

‡ Towards the close of the century this ceremony took place before a copy of a Christ in the summer dining-hall assigned to Titian. T. Elze, *u. s.*

§ Sansovino, Ven. desc. p. 450, and Elze, *u. s.*

‖ This picture represents Christ, of life size, seen to the waist, blessing with his right, holding an

the walls there were allegories by Palma, Tintoretto, and other artists, and subjects on gilt leather by Paolo Veronese. But the chief attraction of the Fondaco at the period of its completion was the pictorial decoration, completed at the state's expense, by Giorgione and Titian. Of the ornaments on the canal front we know little more than Vasari tells us; but Giorgione's commission was not confined to one front, it probably comprised the whole building, and if he painted but the western and northern faces and the inner court, it was no doubt because he transferred a part of his task to Titian. The rapid decay which awaited frescos at Venice was quickly felt in all parts of the Fondaco. The north wind or "Tramontana," soon obliterated all traces of painting on the side of the Rio del Fontico, and a chronicle of the eighteenth century relates that in 1715 nothing was left there but a portion of a frieze on an upper story.* At the same period there were fragments of three friezes visible, with arabesques and heads in monochrome in the spandrels of the archings of the

orb of crystal in his left hand. It hangs in the Evangelical Church, Campo SS. Apostoli, which, previous to the year 1818, was known as the "Scuola dell' Angelo Custode." The picture is on canvas, M. 1·23 high, by 0·91 broad. The date of its execution is given at a guess as 1551 (Venezia e le sue Lagune, *u. s.*, vol. i. pt. ii. p. 101), but it is very doubtful whether Titian's hand was ever employed upon it, even at that late period of his life. We may doubt whether Titian would have painted forms so common and so gaunt, colour so artificial, and lines of such scant correctness. The drapery in particular is very badly set. The resolute touch and rapid handling might point to Tintoretto Schiavone or Palma Giovine, but a something outlandish and foreign in the treatment may be due to Titian's pupil, Amberger. Compare T. Elze, *u. s.*

* T. Elze, *u. s.*

court galleries.* Titian's principal work was a fresco above the portal in the southern face, of which Piccino's print of 1658 gives a correct impression. It represented a female seated on the edge of a stone plinth in front of a stately edifice, with the sky intercepted to the left by a massive wall. Her left leg was bared to the knee, and her foot was raised to trample on a lifeless head. In her right hand she waved a sword, whilst an armed soldier in half length at her feet clutched a dagger behind his back and held the head with his right hand. Tradition assigns to this fresco the title of "Judith;" but the same figure and emblems in an early wall-painting by Lorenzetti at Sienna, are distinguished by the name of "Justitia." Above the group at the Fondaco a nude female was introduced, parting an Eve at the angle near Rialto from two males at the corner of the Calle della Bissa, one of whom was a Levantine, the other a brother of the gay fraternity of the Calza. A broad frieze in dead colour ran along the south front, enlivening the space with arabesques, animals, and fanciful objects of all sorts. The fragments of this decoration which remain are now, not only few, but irretrievably injured, and it may be that as these lines are penned scarce a trace of them remains. We revert to memories of a few years back in recording thus much:—"Judith" or "Justitia," is still visible above the gateway, seated, waving a sword and stamping with her left foot on the head, whilst the

* T. Elze, *u. s.*

soldier in armour looks up at her face. Above this again, and beyond the area once covered by the monochrome frieze, the dim contour of a naked female is just apparent. Between the coupled windows on the same front; the faded outline of two standing figures remain, both of them bareheaded: one, the brother of the Calza, in a striped dress with red and white sleeves and hose, and a red mantle; another in yellow hose, his left hand behind his back, his right concealed in the folds of a red cloak. The whole of these fragments are disfigured by age, wear, and dust.

According to the testimony of those who were favoured enough to see the frescos of Giorgione and Titian in their original state, they were well worthy of admiration. Zanetti's prints of the "Judith," the brother of the Calza, and two female heads and torsos, give but a faint idea of what the originals must have been;* but a comparison of the fragments with those of the western front, shows that Giorgione was swayed by reminiscences of the classic as displayed in antique sculpture, whilst Titian seems to have broken entirely with Greek art, for the sake of modern picturesqueness and a faithful representation of contemporary nature.

Vasari, scandalized by this mode of decoration, spared neither Giorgione nor Titian, in enumerating its defects. But it is a proof of the haste with which he wrote that he failed to distinguish between the

* Zanetti (A.), Varie Pitture a fresco de' principali maestri Veneziani a Venezia, fol. 1760, pp. iv–vii.

works of the two painters, and assigned the whole blame of failure to one of them. "Giorgione," he says, "merely painted figures according to his fancy, neglecting to illustrate a story or to represent the deeds of any person celebrated in the annals of ancient or modern history; and I for one was never able to fathom his meaning, nor found any one that had fathomed it. Here he depicts a woman, there a man in varying attitudes; here he puts in a lion's head, there an angel with the semblance of Cupid which no one can understand. There is, indeed, a female above the gateway in Merceria, which displays the form of a Judith seated with the head of a giant beneath her, and wielding a drawn sword whilst she talks to a German below; but I never was able to interpret what the painter intended to represent, unless it be a 'Germania.'"*

But later critics, and particularly Zanetti, resting his opinion upon that of Sebastian Ricci and others whose memory preserved the traditions of the older Venetian school, brought a less prejudiced judgment to bear upon the subject, and declared, we may think, justly,—that both Giorgione and Titian gave proof of great and remarkable skill.† "Whilst Giorgione showed a fervid and original spirit and opened up a new path over which he shed a light that was to guide posterity, Titian exhibited in his creations a grander but more equable genius, leaning at first indeed on Giorgione's example, but expanding soon

* Vas. vii. pp. 84, 85.

† Zanetti, Varie Pitture a fresco, note to vi.

after with such force and rapidity as to place him in advance of his rival, on an eminence which no later craftsman was able to climb. Titian was characterized by this, that he painted flesh in which the blood appeared to mantle, whilst the art of the painter was merged in the power of a creator. He imagined forms of grander proportions, of more sunny impast, of more harmonious hues than his competitors. With incomparable skill he gave tenderness to flesh by transitions of half tone and broken contrasted colours. He moderated the fire of Giorgione, whose strength lay in resolute action, fanciful movement, and a mysterious artifice in disposing shadows contrasting darkly with hot red lights, blended, strengthened, or blurred so as to produce the semblance of exuberant life."*

The relative position of Titian and Giorgione when they painted the Fondaco, is variously described by historians according to the bias of the time in which they gathered their information. Vasari's statement is that Titian forsook the manner of the Bellini to assume that of Giorgione when he was eighteen years of age. Shortly after this he imitated Giorgione so well in a portrait of one of the Barbarigos that his name on the background was the only reliable clue to the authorship of the picture. Under Barbarigo's protection Titian subsequently received permission to work at the Fondaco.† Dolce confirms Vasari, in

* Zanetti, Varie Pitture a fresco, note to vi.

† Vas. xiii. 20. There is no clue to the portrait named in the text, and the suggestion made by the annotators to Vasari (xiii. 20),

saying, that he was assistant to Giorgione and painted the Fondaco when he was twenty, but he adds that after the Fondaco was completed and Giorgione's friends assigned to him frescos that had been finished by Titian, the two men became estranged, and Giorgione never forgave his assistant's superiority.* There is a wilful perversion of truth in both writers as to the age of Titian, which seems to have had its origin in a wish to exalt the pupil at the expense of his master. But we need not infer that Titian countenanced such a course, since the tradition of his own family gave quite another turn to the story. It is not doubtful that the anonymous writer of Titian's life dedicated by Tizianello to the Countess of Arundel was well acquainted with the history of the Vecelli; and, according to him, Titian began very early to discriminate between the manner of Bellini and the more delicate and modern style of Barbarella. For some time he secretly studied Giorgione's pictures, and then won Giorgione's affection, who finally gave him instruction in the precepts of his art. When Giorgione received the commission for the Fondaco, he shared it of his own accord with Titian who was then his assistant; and, so far from being hurt at the superiority which his scholar displayed, he confessed it and rejoiced that he had been able to afford him the means of securing so enviable a position.† This

that it was a likeness of the Doge, Agostino Barbarigo, taken with the Barbarigo Collection to St. Petersburg in 1850, will not bear examination. We shall see, indeed, that no portrait of Titian's early time exists at St. Petersburg.

* Dolce, Dialogo, p. 64.

† Tizianello's Anon., p. iv.

graceful statement of facts probably deserves more credit than that of Dolce and Vasari; and it appears the more credible, since we know that Titian's name appears in none of the public records that have reference to the decoration of the Fondaco; yet we need not reject entirely because of occasional inaccuracies all that Vasari and Dolce relate in respect of Titian and Giorgione, and we may well believe that their friendship was formed when Titian was rising to manhood. But the date of their common labours at the Fondaco must be placed much later in the sixteenth century, than that of their first acquaintance. We can thus understand how it might happen that Titian should paint at a comparatively early period the "Man of Sorrows," of the school of San Rocco; and, further on in life, a picture like "Christ carrying his Cross," in the church of San Rocco. Again it may have been the influence of one of the Barbarigos that induced Giorgione to share his labours at the Fondaco with Titian; for Bernardo Barbarigo was one of the patrician family of that name who filled important offices in Venice at the opening of the sixteenth century, and he held the post of commissioner of the Salt-office when the Fondaco was burnt, being raised to the Council of Ten when superseded by Francesco de' Garzoni.* It may be argued further that the story of Titian's estrangement from Giorgione hardly seems consistent with traditions which assign to him the completion of

* Lorenzi, *u. s.*, i. 128–131.

pictures left unfinished at Giorgione's death;* and it is a fact worthy of consideration that so long as Giorgione lived, Titian never received commissions from the Venetian State; whilst after that event he was not possessed of sufficient influence to set aside Bellini, or take his old master's place, but wandered from the capital into the provinces to paint frescos at Padua and Vicenza.

Long before the time when Titian's fame had become dear to Venetians of every grade, the progress which his art was making might have been watched with interest by the members of his family at Cadore. Conte Vecelli might have had occasion to visit his grand-nephew when he came as agent of the Cadorines to Venice in 1501. Tiziano di Andrea Vecelli, the painter's kinsman, a lawyer of standing, who was sent as an envoy from his countrymen to

* The list of pictures described as "begun by Giorgione and finished by Titian," is as follows: Venice, Casa M. Jeronimo Marcello (1525), "The canvas of Venus naked, asleep in a landscape, with Cupid, is by Giorgione, but the landscape and Cupid were finished by Titian" (Anon. Morelli, p. 66). Venice, Casa Gabriel Vendramin (1530), "The dead Christ on the sepulchre, supported by an angel, is by Giorgione, and re-touched by Titian" (Anon. Morelli, p. 80). Noteworthy is the statement (in Passavant's Raphael, Vie et Œuvres, Paris edition, ii. p. 370) that Titian painted a portrait of Giorgione, which was engraved by Van Dalen. But on this point some further study is required. The portrait as engraved is one of the finest creations of Titian. The head is turned to the left; the hair is cropped short, the beard black and long. The left hand holds a book. The features are grand in their regularity; they are singularly like those of the Christ of the Tribute Money. Various opinions have been expressed as to whether the person represented be Giorgione or not. Some persons go so far as to assign the picture from which the engraving was taken to Giorgione. Unhappily this picture is one which no one is able at present to trace.

Venice in 1507, would naturally use the influence of his position to push the fortunes of his relative.* Nor is it likely on the other hand that the painter himself should have neglected his Alpine home and failed to revisit the valleys dear to him by the ties of family and relationship. Whilst he was spending his days in strenuous labour at Venice, his brother Francesco had grown up into boyhood, and dreamt of repairing to the Lowlands to study the art of the draughtsman. He was twelve years old, says Vincenzo Vecelli, when his father determined to part with him, and Titian, who was then at Cadore, took him to the capital where he learnt "the drawing and shading of pictures," conceived we may think by the genius of his elder brother.† At the period of Tiziano Vecelli's mission to the Doge in 1507, Italy had been invaded by French armies, and Maximilian of Austria was observing with concern the growing strength of France, and the waning influence of the

* Ciani, ii. 67. Tiziano di Andrea Vecelli was the son of Andrea Vecelli, and first cousin to Gregorio Vecelli, Titian's father.

† Most historians assume that Francesco was older than Titian, and that he was sent to Venice at the same time as his brother; yet there is no proof of this, but rather of the contrary. Neither Vasari nor Dolce mentions Francesco; Tizianello's Anonimo merely states that he was a painter. Vincenzo's Panegyric (*antea*) states that Francesco, "natus annum duodecimum, cum Titiano Venetias missus est; ubi cum per aliquod temporis intervallum commoratus esset, ac graphidi operam dedisset, quæ est umbrarum, et futuræ picturæ delineatio, cupidus visendi res novas . . . in militiam profectus est . . . quo tempore Veneti sub Verona et Vicentia bellum gerebant adversus Gallos et Hispanos." With respect to the time when Francesco became a soldier, Tizianello's Anonimo says distinctly it was: "nelle rivoluzioni della congiura di Cambrai." See the Anonimo, p. ii., and the Panegyric in Ticozzi's Pitt. Vecelli, p. 321.

Empire on Italian soil. Between him and Rome, where of old the Emperors had been crowned, there lay the possessions of Venice, and behind these again the newly acquired conquests of Louis the Twelfth. Maximilian, brooding for a time over these evils, resolved at last to call a diet at Constance, to aid him in supporting German rights in Italy. His more immediate aim was to obtain a passage through the Venetian States, his final purpose to enforce the claims of the Empire at the head of an army. To this end he summoned Venice to grant a passage to his troops, which he mustered partly in Tyrol, and partly on the slopes of the Julian Alps. Venice replied with a message equivalent to a declaration of war. Unarmed, she said, the Emperor might pass; an army would certainly be resisted. As early as the year 1500, Bartolommeo d'Alviano had been sent by the Doge to inspect the defences of the Cadorines. He found the passes fairly fortified, but suggested the repair of Bottestagno in the north-west, and the erection of a fort at the Chiusa of Lozzo.* The insufficiency of these precautions was soon tested. Assembling a corps in January, 1508, at Trent, Maximilian moved on the 5th of the following February to Brünneck, and prepared with 6,000 men to invade Cadore. Opposite to him lay the strong Castle of Bottestagno, about to be reinforced by detachments from Cadore, conspicuous among them, no doubt, Titian's father, Gregorio, who commanded

* Ciani, ii. 157.

the century of Pieve, at their head Barnabo of Domegge, who in 1500 had accompanied Dalviano on his round of inspection. Warned, on his arrival at Cortina, that the enemy was at hand, Barnabo neglected every precaution required of a captain in his position. He fancied that in mid-winter and in an Alpine country the Imperialists would follow the high road from Landro and break their strength against the walls of Bottestagno, but they were much more enterprising than he supposed; and, as he lay quietly waiting for them, they declined the road to Bottestagno, and crossing the Misurina pass to his right threatened his flank at Cortina. His retreat to the "Chiusa" of Venas, opened the vale of Ampezzo to Maximilian's lieutenant, who then divided his force and sent one part to the siege of Bottestagno, another to force the pass of Venas. The assault on Venas failed, but Vinigo on the hills to the north having been occupied so as to turn Venas, Barnabo again retreated, part of his men withdrawing to the "Chiusa" of Gardona, the rest to Pieve. Here Pietro Gissi commanded the castle for the Venetian Republic. To a summons sent by the Imperialists on the 24th of February, he gave at first a defiant answer; but his courage failing before the assault, he called Tiziano Vecelli, Palatini, and other chiefs of the Cadorine Government to consult them as to a capitulation, and in spite of their remonstrances, yielded the castle without conditions.

Emboldened by his success, the Austrian commander assembled the notables at a conference, in

which he dwelt with much cleverness upon the advantages which would accrue to Cadore if it were incorporated in the Tyrol. But the magnates were not to be convinced. They preferred the rule of Venice to that of Maximilian; and, seeing the uselessness of open resistance under adverse circumstances, they formed themselves into a secret committee of fifteen, determined to watch the course of events, inform the Venetian government, and keep alive the feeling of Venetian nationality. Chiefs of this movement were Andrea Vecelli, Titian's grand-uncle, and Andrea's son Tiziano Vecelli, together with Matteo and Agostino Palatini and Bernardino Constantini.* The latter was entrusted with the duty of opening communications with the Lowlands, the former busied themselves with measures to comfort the fugitive Cadorines in the glens and huts to which they had fled for refuge. Meanwhile the Senate at Venice had been informed of Maximilian's intentions, and commissioned Dalviano on the one hand to concentrate forces in advance of Belluno, on the other Girolamo Savorgnano to move up the valley of the Tagliamento to the upper waters of the Piave. Both commanders obeyed their instructions with uncommon energy; and, on the 27th of February, Savorgnano occupied Lorenzago, Pelos, and Tre Ponti, whilst Dalviano came up to Longarone. Had the Germans been well served they would probably have attacked one or the other of the Venetian Generals at some advantage,

* See Giuseppe Ciani's "Lettera inedita di Tiziano Vecellio al Pittore Tiziano," with notes, 8vo, Ceneda, 1862, pp. 7, 8.

but they neglected to do so, thinking that Dalviano would be easily worsted in attempting the pass of Longarone; and so that the presence of Savorgnano north of Pieve would be of small danger. Dalviano's activity and the superior knowledge which he was enabled to acquire by consultation with the country people, proved how baseless these considerations were. Savorgnano had not been long at Lorenzago before he was met by Andrea and Tiziano Vecelli, who gave him every information as to the movements of Dalviano and the position of the Germans. They warned Savorgnano of the danger which Dalviano would incur if he attempted the Longarone pass, and offered to take a message to him for the purpose of concerting a combined movement;—he to make a flank march up the vale of Zoldo and the Cibiana pass, Savorgnano to march down the valley of the Piave from Lozzo. The two Vecelli, accompanied by Savorgnano's son, accomplished, as only mountaineers could do, the difficult journey between Lorenzago and Longarone, crossing in winter a chain of dolomites on the left bank of the Piave which in summer would test the endurance of a seasoned Alpine climber. At Capo di Ponte near Longarone the Vecelli met Dalviano, who agreed at once to their plan, and bade them return to inform Savorgnano that he would begin the flank march on the 28th of February. George Cornaro, brother of the Queen of Cyprus, who joined Dalviano as "proveditore" after the departure of the Vecelli, fully approved of the movement; and at the appointed time the Venetian force,

4000 strong with four mountain guns and an escort of Stradiot cavalry, started on the rugged path leading up the sides of the Mae torrent to Forno. Preparations had already been made at Dalviano's request to clear the path up to the saddle overlooking Cibiana of snow, but the weather was cold and a freezing mist overhung the landscape. Before the vanguard entered the hamlet of Cibiana, night had set in; yet it was neither feasible nor prudent to lose by a halt the benefit of surprise. Dalviano proceeded; and, pressing on through the night, crossed the Boite bridge and surprised the garrison of Venas: leaving a detachment there, he found himself before dawn in the strong position of Valle.

The Germans in Cadore were warned of their peril—though too late—by the glare of a fire kindled by some imprudent Stradiots. Leaving eighty men in charge of the castle, they issued out into the open to engage Dalviano. But in the grey of the morning this indefatigable commander had taken measures to secure their defeat. He had thrown a small force into Nebbiù on his left, and posted 800 men in the woods of Monte Zucco on his right, with instructions to take the enemy, when advancing their centre, on both flanks. The Germans played into his hands completely; attacked Dalviano's centre as it warily drew back, and fell into the trap so headlong, that the whole of their guns were taken, their army routed, and those who escaped from the field were massacred by the Stradiots in pursuit.

The first fruits of this victory were the recapture

of Cadore, the loss of Pordenone to the Imperialists, and a truce between Maximilian and Venice. We shall see how Titian in subsequent years was obliged to study the stirring episodes of this campaign for the sake of forming them into a picture.* The pride with which the Venetians contemplated it, was altogether justifiable; for it showed them capable of brilliant feats of arms on land. Yet it is doubtful whether any other engagement of the time was more fruitful of evil consequences to the Republic.

The part which the Vecelli had taken in the campaign at Cadore was not without exhilarating effect on the more distant members of the family. Francesco Vecelli, whose time had been occupied at Venice in the practice of a peaceful profession, was altogether diverted from the study of art by the thought of military renown. He gave up pencil and brush to take service in the army of Venice, whilst Titian, unwilling to curb a determination which he felt himself unable to share, surrendered himself as busily as ever to the favourite pursuit of his life. The losses in money, men, and possessions, in which the Venetians were soon after involved, doubtless reacted most seriously on the market upon which artists were wont to rely; and during the interval which elapsed between the signature of the treaty of Cambrai in December, 1508, and the truce with

* For these Cadorine episodes, Palatini's Chronicle of Cadore, Ciani, ii. 163–189, and MS. [illegible] dore, have been consulted. But there is a very picturesque sketch of them in Gilbert's Cadore, *u. s.*

Maximilian in April, 1512, we fail to discover that Titian obtained any order in Venice worthy of his talent or his fame. But the paralysis caused by war —though it might affect the quantity and sale— could not diminish the quality of the work which Titian got through; and it is characteristic of this period that it yielded not only Madonnas of the highest finish, but the splendid portrait of a Doge in the Vatican Museum, and that marvellous example of polished fashioning the "Christ" of "The Tribute Money," at Dresden.

During the few years which had elapsed since the opening of the century, Venice had witnessed some changes in the form of her art. The study of the classic, as understood by Mantegna, had very much died out, though some artists might be found who still favoured a style more severe than that of the colourists. But the great majority of painters were slowly receding from the antique, in so far as they considered its high and ideal qualities more difficult to attain than expert handling, brush-tricks, and harmonious colour. It would be too much indeed to say that the superior claims of antique art to be called excellent were questioned. But it seems as if the Venetians had all but surrendered the hope of acquiring absolute purity of shape and outline, and turned their thoughts to models of a standard less lofty, in order to charm by imitating the substance rather than the shape of flesh, the texture and tone rather than the fold and fall of dress. So, as regards Giorgione, the Venetians might note the preservation

of the traditions of Greek sculpture in the attitudes of figures adorning the Fondaco, or in Titian's pictures they might observe the free use of antique bas-relief as a surface decoration; but the display of ideal classicism was not the less shallow, and visible, if at all, superficially. Yet it may be conceived that the novelty of creations stirring to the senses by the richness of their tints, and rare as embodying with a certain freedom the beautiful creations of Greek carving, would naturally lead to the belief—passing it might be, yet genuine—that a combination of both was necessary to the production of a perfect picture; and this would account for the judgment passed upon Dürer, when, at Venice in 1506, he was taunted with being a good engraver but no colourist, a good draughtsman but not familiar with the antique.* Giovanni Bellini, who still lived, and was then acknowledged as the Nestor of the schools, was perhaps, of all the Venetians, the only master who combined the old purity and simplicity with a feeling for colour. Giorgione, after him, had perhaps most consciousness of the importance of elevating nature above itself, after the fashion of the Greeks. Palma and Titian were gradually preparing to substitute modelling and touch for contour, and to make the study of nature paramount. But all artists of the time at Venice, as at Florence and Rome, were struck by something grand and superior in the genius of Dürer; and it would be probable in itself, were it

* Campe's Reliquien von Alb. Dürer, 12mo, Nüremberg, 1828, pp. 13 and 27.

not almost historically proved that the great precision and finish which characterised his works at this period, preserved the Venetians, Palma and Titian included, from that laxity of treatment which the mere study of colour and its technical facilities engenders. Titian, as it happened, did not maintain entirely the old customs of the school. His panels and canvases, polished as they are, were not drawn from cartoons, or begun with a predetermined outline. The design was not carried out with a point or a style, but freely with a brush dipped in a brown pigment diluted with water to a liquid consistency; and the lightness of heart with which the composition was begun, frequently involved alterations which the painter did not hesitate to make, if it appeared that his second thought was better than his first. But in spite of the slightness of these beginnings, Titian's pictures were not put forth as finished without having been filed and polished to perfection; and it would be highly desirable, were it not so difficult, to discover by what process he acquired the delicate smoothness and gloss which are peculiarly marked in this form of his art.

If it should be asked how it is possible to describe the first phase of a method the secret of which must necessarily be concealed under the burnish of completed works, the answer is, that modern ingenuity has revealed the state of the back of some of Titian's pieces; and this revelation we have in the case of a well-known panel at the Belvedere at Vienna, in which the Virgin is represented with Christ and the

boy Baptist between St. Joseph and St. Zacharias. Here it has been possible to ascertain that the Virgin, who turns her charming head to the left as she looks at Christ making his playful offering of cherries, was originally designed turning her head to the right and looking down at what is now the boy St. John. Yet it is impossible to conceive—and we see it still, though the surfaces are disfigured by minute retouching—a more glossy finish united to more subtle modelling, or greater purity in colours of the richest tinge and most dazzling brightness. The picture is technically the production of an experienced craftsman. The feeling which animates it is that of a young and eager nature. There is as much charm in the stride of the infant Christ, or his childish way of carrying a bunch of cherries with both hands, as there is in the graceful longing of the Baptist looking up. The tenderness of expression in the gaze of the Virgin is beyond measure attractive, whilst the calm of St. Joseph, and the pensiveness of the turbaned Zacharias, are equally well rendered. Nothing except the polish of the modelling can exceed the sheen of the glazed reds and blues in the Virgin's tunic and mantle: the lawn round Christ's waist, the gauze of the veil hanging from the Virgin's shoulder to his feet are delicate to an extreme degree. The treatment, still reminiscent of Palma, reveals the lasting influence which that great master wielded upon Titian.* We

* Vienna, Belvedere, Italian School, 1st Floor, Room 2, No. 64; [illegible] The Virgin sits behind a parapet on which the infant Christ stands. In her left hand she holds a sprig of



MADONNA AND SAINTS. GALLERY OF VIENNA.

[*Vol. I., p.* 107.

may believe that as early as the time in which this picture was produced, Titian, with the help of assistants, completed others more important in size or in number of figures: none, however, more perfect; not even the Virgin and Child with attendant saints, St. Stephen, St. Jerome, and St. George, in the Gallery of Vienna; nor the Virgin and Child, St. Stephen, St. Ambrose, and St. Maurice, at the Louvre. None of these, though of the same period, are executed with as much care. None show the figures so well distributed or so admirably wrought; or display a tone so sweet in its golden richness.* If we desire any-

cherries. Behind her is an embroidered red and gold damask cloth; to the left St. Joseph, in a brown coat, holds a staff; to the right St. Zacharias, in a green turban, looks on. Both heads are relieved on a blue sky; that of St. Joseph is much injured, being mostly re-painted afresh, and the hand new. The beard and other parts of St. Zacharias' head are also re-painted, as are likewise parts of the parapet. The picture was much injured, and was transferred to canvas—during which operation the back of it became distinctly visible—and was photographed. The panel belonged to the collection of Archduke Leopold Wilhelm as early as the middle of the 17th century. The copy engraved by Lefebre was in private hands at Venice. See his collection of Titian's and Paolo Veronese's pictures executed for Louis XIV. in 1682. A photograph of the Belvedere picture has been taken by Miethke and Wawra of Vienna. An old copy on canvas, in part unfinished, was preserved a few years ago in the house of Signor Cadorin at Venice. Another copy, of smaller size and inferior value, was quite lately to be seen under a portico near a house marked No. 4164A in the Via del Busanello at Padua. A fourth copy is in the Imperial Palace of the Hradschin at Prague. A fifth, by Teniers, is in the Marlborough Collection at Blenheim.

* The pictures at Vienna and Paris are similar, and with some slight varieties contain the same figures. But the panel at Vienna is the better of the two.

Vienna, Belvedere, Italian School, 1st Floor, Room 2; Wood, 3 ft. 5 in. high, by 4 ft. 3 in., half-lengths. The Virgin in the open air, in front of a building, sits to the left, adoring the infant Christ on her lap. In

thing better or more advanced, we must follow the painter's career a little further, when we again find him improving in the Virgin and Child with St. Anthony and the Boy Baptist at the Uffizi of Florence, or in the Madonna with St. Bridget and a saint in panoply, at Madrid. Both these pictures display the influence exercised on Titian by Palma:—the first, by its appeal to those open charms of nature which Palma embodied in "Holy Conversations," inscened in country nooks far away from human habitations; the second, by its combination of forms and models, familiar not only in the religious pieces, but in the portraits of Palma Vecchio.

At the Uffizi, the same thought as in the earlier picture of Vienna:—The boy Baptist with his offering;

front, to the right, St. Jerome reads a large folio; whilst at one side St. Stephen, in black, carries a palm, and St. George, in armour, holds the staff of his lance. We note a strong contrast between the small proportions of the Virgin's head and the large size of St. Jerome's, whose grand face and grey beard, stained by age, are full of character. Remarkable as before, and distinctive for the period of which we are now treating, are the smoothness, polish, and delicate blending, as well as the brightness of colour, in all the surfaces. But the execution, though it recalls Titian's Palmesque time, is not quite up to the master's best mark, displaying here and there some weakness in the filling up, some want of force in drawing, and some angularity in draperies. Yet the emptiness which we observe may be due to restoring. A large rent, as from a blow of a hammer, disfigures the infant Christ's head. In repairing this, the face, and some surrounding parts, including the distant hills, were retouched, glazed, and tuned afresh. This picture once belonged to the Archduke Leopold Wilhelm. It is engraved by Lisebetius, in Tenier's Series of 1660, and photographed by Wawra.

Louvre, No. 458, canvas, M. 1.08 high, by 1.32, half-lengths. The same picture as the foregoing, but instead of Jerome, the same figure in a red cap called St. Ambrose, whilst St. George here is called St. Maurice. Collection of Louis XIV. Photograph by Braun.

the infant Christ, stooping this time from His mother's lap, accepting the roses, or rather having taken as much as he could carry, looking down at the bunch which the Baptist still holds up to him; the Virgin smiling at the scene, as she sits under the shelter of a brown hanging in the corner of a landscape; at her side the white-haired and bearded St. Anthony with his bell, leans on his staff, his face almost Leonardesque in type, and regularity of feature. Nothing as yet approaching this work in sweetness of tone, freedom of modelling or clever appeal to nature, has come from Titian's hand. With all the power of blending and finish which goes to form the master's relationship in art with Palma, we have pigments of more solid impast, a more subtle breaking of the colour into half-tints, more delicate glazings, and a balance of light and shade which shows increased attention to combinations of tints with contrasts by adumbration. The atmosphere which pervades the foreground extends vaguely to a delightful corner of landscape stretching far away into a wooded country. The likeness of the mother to the infant, the tender age of Christ as compared with John, the comely virgin in a white veil of singular gauzy lightness, the white locks of St. Anthony and the streaks of his beard,—all this is so masterly that we wonder at the rapidity with which the formal manner of the fifteenth, merges into the bolder and more natural treatment of the sixteenth century.*

* Florence, Uffizi, No. 633, wood, half-lengths, just under life-size. The Virgin as usual in red dress and blue mantle; John,

At Madrid, St. Bridget stands with a basin of flowers in her hand, in front of the infant Saviour, who bends out of the Virgin's arms to seize the offering, yet turns his face to his mother, as if inquiring shall he take it or not. Against the sky and white cloud of the distance, the form of St. Bridget alone is relieved. The Virgin and the saint in armour to the left stand out in front of hangings of that gorgeous green which seems peculiar in its brightness to the Venetians. With ease in action and movement a charming expression is combined. The juicy tints and glossy handling are those of Titian's Palmesque period; and St. Bridget is the same lovely girl whose features Palma painted with equal fondness and skill in the panel called Violante, at the Belvedere of Vienna. But it is not this likeness alone, which after all may be accidental, that points to intimate relations at this period between Titian and Palma: it is the cast of form generally, the fair skin, the rounded shape, and the luscious tone. Yet there is now this difference between the two masters, that Titian's art is more dignified and graceful, and more natural, whilst his idea of drapery and the flow of its folds is much more comprehensive than that of his rival. He shows, too, much greater fertility of resource

to the left, in a skin jacket; St. Anthony, to the right, in brown. Some of the freshness of this picture has departed. It scaled, and was stippled up in the slits; and in this way the Virgin's face has suffered injury. Quite lately, indeed, it became necessary to stop the flaking of the colours. The head of St. Anthony is best preserved. On the jacket of the boy Baptist are the words "TICIANVS, f." Photograph by Braun.

in the handling of flesh than Palma, being much more clever and subtle in harmonizing light with half-tint by tender and cool transitions of grey crossed with red, and much more effective in breaking up shadow with contrasting touches of livid tone, yet fusing and blending all into a polished surface, fresh as of yesterday, and of almost spotless purity by the use of the clearest and finest glazings that it is possible to imagine.*

But one example, equal to these, is to be found in England: it is a charming picture at Burleigh House, representing the Virgin seated on a stone bench in front of a landscape, and looking with great fondness at the infant Christ, who smiles as he lies at full length on her lap.†

In the panel of the Madonna with St. Bridget at Madrid, the male figure in armour is supposed to represent St. Hulfus, the husband of St. Bridget; but the portrait character of the head would justify us in believing that the garb of a saint conceals the likeness of a donor. In this form it was not unusual for

* Madrid Museum, No. 236, wood, M. 0.86 high, by 1.30, half-lengths. Originally in the Escurial, this picture is still catalogued under the name of Giorgione. There are re-touches here and there to be noticed: in the neck and cheek, one hand, and part of the yellow dress of St. Bridget; in the hand of the saint in armour; in the ear and neck of the infant Christ. The sky has lost tone from cleaning. A replica, with slight variations, is No. 632 at Hampton Court, under the name of "Giorgione," but this replica is not by Titian, being a careful yet feeble copy, of paler tones than those of the original.

† Burleigh House, seat of the Marquis of Exeter. Half-lengths of half the life size, not free from injury from cleaning. Slight re-touches are observable in the head of the Virgin, and in the upper part of the infant Christ's frame.

persons desirous of leaving memories of themselves to their children to be portrayed; but portraiture as traditionally carried out since the fourteenth century, that is in the bust shape, remained customary, and in one of these we first find Titian emulating Antonello and Giovanni Bellini. We saw how the Venetians, at a time of rude pictorial culture, set value on the portraits of their Doges. In later centuries when art became more skilled, their fondness for this class of delineation increased; and it became the privilege of the best masters to take sittings from the highest person in the state. We shall soon perceive how Titian in course of years rose to the enjoyment of this privilege. At the period of which we are now treating, Giovanni Bellini led in the practice of his profession, and his pupil dared not to aspire to paint a living Doge. But the family of a deceased Doge might desire to perpetuate his likeness in numerous examples, and for that purpose might confide an old portrait to a young artist to copy. In this way Titian came early in the sixteenth century, and probably about the time of the rebuilding of the Fondaco, to revive n canvas the form of Niccolo Marcello, who sat upon the ducal throne between 1473 and 1474. To any one who looks at this portrait—a profile in the Vatican Museum—it will appear almost incredible that such a likeness should have been possible without a model. If ever Titian's name was written on any creation, it is written on this; and although much has been done, by abrasion of the background and repainting of several parts, to

impair the value of the work, it is still a specimen of the most delicate blending and easy treatment that the years under notice produced. We may recognize the person depicted, from a wood-carving once in possession of Emmanuel Cicogna at Venice. The features are such as to challenge attention; for the man, in spite of his ugliness, is full of character; his chin recedes, his hanging under lip is on a level with the bulb of a nose of large projection, and the skin of the face is drawn off into pursy wrinkles, but out of these wrinkles a small lack-lustre eye is shining, and we fancy the man to have been benevolent and fond of dinners. Such a portrait of Leonardo Loredano, at that time chief of Venice, would probably have made Titian's fortune at once; but representing as it did a Doge long since forgotten, could only raise the master in the eyes of a comparatively small circle. He was never more careful in modelling, more studied in outline, or more successful in producing tones of golden warmth; and if much has been lost in the washes of cleaners or the daubs of restorers, much on the other hand has been left to preserve the charm of the painter's incomparable skill.*

* Vatican Gallery, No. XXI., canvas, M. 1.5 high, by 0.89, from the Aldrovandi collection at Bologna. The figure is life size, turned to the left, and visible to the waist, relieved against a grey brown ground, burnt away by a wash of spirits of wine. The right hand is repainted, and other parts, including the face, have been injured by cleaning and retouching. Photograph by Alinari. A modern copy of this piece belongs to Signor Gualandi, at Bologna, and here, in the back of the canvas, is a note stating that Emmanuel Cicogna was in possession of a carved profile, which proved this Doge to be Niccolò Marcello.

Under the same conditions, but with varieties upon which we shall have to dwell, Titian probably executed a likeness of Marco Barbarigo, who died at Venice in 1485, after holding the ducal chair for less than a year. There hangs to this piece a fragment of art history, to which we may first attend. At Titian's death in 1576, his property was inherited by Pomponio, the son and heir, who squandered in a few years the fruits of his father's labours. In 1581, Pomponio sold to Christoforo Barbarigo, a descendant of the Doges, the house of Titian with all its contents and appurtenances, and with the house a number of pictures which had served as ornaments to the great master's studio.* Amongst the heirlooms thus disposed of, was a "Christ carrying his Cross," a Magdalen, a Madonna, a Venus, and a series of other works assigned to Titian. At the sale of the Barbarigo collection in 1850, the most important canvases passed into the hands of the Emperor of Russia, but previous to that date, a certain number of them had gone by division to collaterals, and amongst these the portrait of Marco Barbarigo to which allusion has been made.† The present owner of this heirloom is Count Sebastian Giustiniani Barbarigo of Padua, who thus claims—not without justification—to possess original studies which hung for years in Titian's dwelling. The likeness of Marco Barbarigo—if it be by Titian—must necessarily have

* Cadorin, Dello Amore, *u. s.*, pp. 77, 98—101.

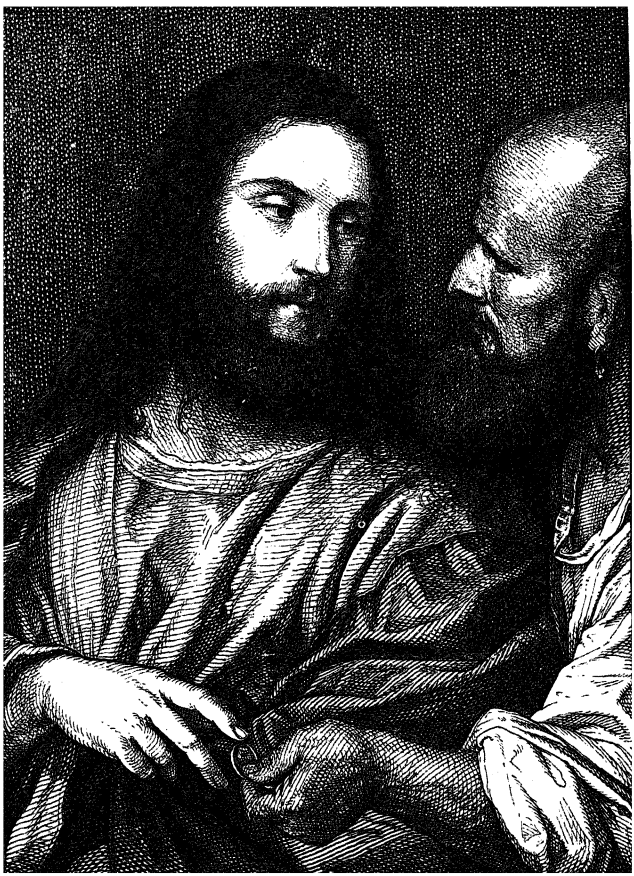
† Selvatico (P.), Di Alcuni Abbozzi di Tiziano, 8vo, Padova, 1875; a pamphlet of fifteen pages.

been copied from an earlier picture, but we saw it is not contrary to presumption to think that Titian followed this course, which was habitual with him even in the days of his greatest renown. The Doge is represented in the bust shape, on a slightly primed canvas of fine texture; his profile of life size, turned to the right. The ducal cap on his head, the state mantle of ermine on his shoulders, he stands without motion, clutching with his hand, which peeps from under the mantle, the fur edge of a red vest. On the dark ground at the side of the head we read: "MARCVS BARBADICVS VENETIAR, DVX ANNO MCCCCLXXXV," but the letters are new, and the wall on which they lie is daubed with recent paint. The features of the man are not to be mistaken. His face is marked by a large projecting nose, tumid lips and an open eye. The features, frequently repeated on medals, are found in a canvas of the public palace at Venice. The flesh lights are uniform, with a warm yellow brown flush shaded off to half tones with lake and red earth, and contrasted here and there with umber or terra verde. The pigments are thin and spare, laid in at one sitting, and altogether free from rubbings or glazings; and this is a form of technical execution unusual in Titian, who commonly painted with a brush full of matter, laying on beds of colour, which he subsequently kneaded and toned and grained till they were fit to receive the final glazes and modulations. But there is no reason why Titian, if anxious to produce a model for use in the workshop, should not have suited his practice to the occasion, and preferred

the slight and simple manner employed on this canvas, to that of his finished pieces. What he might lose by this, namely the richness and beauty of tint which form the great attraction of pictures intended for public exhibition, would naturally be compensated by a sober and studied rendering of form and outline; and there is no denying that in this respect the work before us is masterly, though the pigments, being thin, have lost the freshness and juiciness, which we always expect from Titian. We have in fact a skilful study, parts of which—the hand for instance—are much in Titian's style, the treatment of which is firm and precise, and quite superior to anything that the master's followers or imitators could have done, but without the charms of tint and sweetness which his delicate and subtle brush could at will produce. Titian here, we must remember, would not have been painting from life, but from an inanimate object; and though we know nothing of his style in this form, it is not beyond the range of probability that he should, under the circumstances noted, produce a canvas like that of Count Giustiniani.*

But the time was now approaching, when Titian was to create one of those masterpieces which mark an epoch and give repute to their author; and it is not too much to say that the Christ of "The Tribute Money," which long adorned the palace of the Duke

* The picture has been lined afresh, and two strips of new canvas have been added to its sides. The Doge's red hat has the usual ornaments of pearl. The lappet which covers the ear is white, likewise the shirt collar. The present size of the picture is M. 0.97 high, by 1.38.



CHRIST OF THE TRIBUTE MONEY.

DRESDEN MUSEUM.

[*Vol. I., p.* 116.

of Ferrara, and now hangs in the museum of Dresden, is a work which challenges admiration after three centuries and a half, with the same irresistible certainty with which it challenged the admiration of Titian's friends and countrymen at the period of its completion. Distinct records of Titian's first connection with the Duke of Ferrara are not extant, and it would be presuming to assert, that the Christ of "The Tribute Money" was finished by him at the request of Alfonso d'Este; but it is important to remember, that the words: "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's," were the device of Alfonso's gold coins, and it is not doubtful that the picture illustrating that device passed very early into the hands of the Duke. It is not easy in the meanwhile to feign unconcern, when we find the origin of so magnificent a work concealed in the clouded medium of an anecdote; but anecdotes, which are the weeds of history, sometimes have their use in so far as they embody a particle of truth; and if the following, from the babbling story of Scanelli, should be in the main untrue, it would still confirm what we accept as true, that a great and lasting influence was wielded upon artists at Venice by the talent of Dürer. Scanelli, we must recollect, wrote his "Microcosmo" in 1655, and published it in 1657. He was an ardent admirer of Titian, and particularly desired to ascertain under what conditions the Christ of "The Tribute Money" was produced.

He consulted an artist of large practice, and from him he ascertained that during a stay of some time

as a youth at Venice, he had consulted an old and respectable friend of Titian, who told him the following story:—"Titian was visited on a certain occasion by a company of German travellers, who were allowed to look at the pictures which his studio contained. On being asked what impression these works conveyed, these gentlemen declared that they only knew of one master capable of finishing as they thought paintings ought to be finished, and that was Dürer; their impression being that Venetian compositions invariably fell below the promise which they had given at their first commencement. To these observations Titian smilingly replied, 'that if he had thought extreme finish to be the end and aim of art, he too would have fallen into the excesses of Dürer. But though long experience had taught him to prefer a broad and even track to a narrow and intricate path, yet he would still take occasion to show that the subtlest detail might be compassed without sacrifice of breadth, and so produced the Christ of the Tribute Money.'"* It is curious that, according to Ridolfi, an envoy of Charles the Fifth at the Court of Ferrara expressed his great surprise that anyone should be able to compete so formidably with Dürer.† But the surprise is explained, for Titian on this occasion showed a transcendent power of imitating nature, and displayed a capacity for finish never before equalled by any of his countrymen.

* Scanelli (Francesco), Il Microcosmo della Pittura, 8vo, Cesena, 1657, pp. 231–4.

† Ridolfi, Maraviglie, i. 209.

Looking at the human face at a certain distance, we lose those details of pore and down which we know to exist, but only care to realise on a closer inspection; and as in nature so in Titian, the hairs or the veins and sinews are delineated, though we lose them by drawing back from the picture, which is then as broad and as fair as if it contained none of those minutiæ. Vasari reflects an opinion which holds to this day, that the "head of Christ is stupendous and miraculous." It was considered by all the artists of his time as the most perfect and best handled of any that Titian ever produced; * but for us it has qualities of a higher merit than those of mere treatment. Simple as the subject is, the thought which it embodies is very subtle. Christ turns towards the questioning Pharisee, and confirms with his eye the gesture of his hand, which points to the coin. His face is youthful, its features and short curly beard are finely framed in a profusion of flowing locks. The Pharisee to the right stands in profile before Jesus, holds the coin and asks the question. The contrast is sublime between the majestic calm and elevation, and what Quandt calls the "Godlike beauty" of Christ, and the low cunning and coarse air of the Pharisee; † between the delicate chiselling of the features, the soft grave eye and pure cut mouth of the Saviour, and the sharp aquiline nose or the crafty glance of the crop-haired malignant Hebrew. It is a pecu-

* Vas. xiii. p. 24.

† V. Quandt's Guide, or "Begleiter," quoted in W. Schaefer's admirable work, Die Kön. Gemälde-gallerie zu Dresden, 8vo, Dresden, 1859, ii. p. 285.

liarity which Titian has caught from Palma, and even carried out in Palma's manner, that he contrasts the fair complexion and marble smoothness of Christ's skin with the rough and weatherbeaten tan of his tempter. The hand, "every finger of which"* points so gracefully and naturally to the effigy of Cæsar on the coin, is manly in spite of its delicacy, and not a whit less strong than that of the Pharisee, whose joints are gnarled by work. The form of a boatman in his working-day shirt, whose arm is hairy in its strength and swarthy from exposure, is pitted against that of the Redeemer, whose gesture, shape, and dress reflect the elevation of His life and thoughts. The form of Christ was never conceived by any of the Venetians of such ideal beauty as this. Nor has Titian ever done better; and it is quite certain that no one, Titian himself included, within the compass of the North Italian Schools, reproduced the human shape with more nature and truth, and with greater delicacy of modelling. Amidst the profusion of locks that falls to Christ's shoulders there are ringlets of which we may count the hairs, and some of these are so light that they seem to float in air, as if ready to wave at the spectator's breath. Nothing can exceed the brightness and sheen or the transparent delicacy of the colours. The drapery is admirable in shade and fold, and we distinguish with ease the loose texture of the bright red tunic, and that of the fine broad-

* V. Quandt, *u. s.*

cloth which forms the blue mantle. The most perfect easel-picture of which Venice ever witnessed the production, this is also the most polished work of Titian.* In it he shows himself indeed the disciple of Palma, the rival of Giorgione, and the jealous competitor of Dürer; yet we see that he copies none of these masters, but reveals the creative talent of one unsurpassed in his day for skill and original power.

During this busy period Titian watched with the deepest interest—we may think—the fortunes of Venetian diplomacy and arms; for on the success or failure of both depended the safety of his brother and

* Dresden Museum, No. 222, wood, 2 ft. 8 in. high, by 2 ft., inscribed on the collar of the Pharisee's shirt, "TICIANVS F." According to Vas. (xiv. p. 24) the panel was framed in the woodwork of a door in the studio of Alfonso I. of Ferrara. It subsequently came into the gallery of the Duke of Modena, and passed with Duke Francesco III.'s whole collection in 1746 to Dresden. The panel was restored at Dresden by Palmaroli, and has lost some of its colour, particularly about the nose and chin of Christ. The hair to the left of the Saviour's face, the background near the face to the right, are re-touched; the outlines are in part overrun, and some of the shadows have been strengthened with dark liquid tinting. The removal of subtle glazings at the transitions of the hair and forehead, gives an air of excessive pallor to the flesh. The Pharisee is better preserved, but some injury is also done here by cleaning, and the profile contour is re-touched in several places. There is no original replica of this masterpiece; but numerous copies exist,—one by Torre in the Dresden Museum, another in the Grosvenor collection in London, with the signature "TISIANVS [sic] F.;" others again in the Galleries of the Uffizi and Parma (this doubtless the same registered in the Farnese inventory of 1680, in Campori's Raccolta de' Cataloghi, p. 245), and in the gallery of the Academy of San Luca at Rome. This picture was engraved by Domenico Picchinuti, M. Steinla, Fr. Knolle, J. Scherz, and W. Witthöft. Photograph by the Photographic Co. in Berlin. A fine lithograph by F. Hanfstängl.

the fate of his home and relations at Cadore. He was not a man of the stolid nerve of Ferramola, of whom it was told that he sat out the storm of Brescia without stirring from his easel. From the safe and sheltered haven of Venice his thoughts would naturally wander to the valleys of Pieve, where the hardy mountaineers were preparing for renewed attacks, or to the squadrons of Maco of Ferrara, the *condottiere* under whose colours Francesco Vecelli was riding.

Maximilian had been foiled in the spring of 1508. Having lost Cadore, Pordenone, Trieste and other places of importance, he had sued for peace. But peace at the price of so many losses could not be but hollow; and such indeed it proved to be. The capture of Genoa by the French had made Venice the greatest naval state in Italy; her possession of Cremona westward and Ravenna southward, her occupation of the Neapolitan ports, had given her such preponderance in the Peninsula as almost to counterbalance her weakness in the Levant; but this very preponderance was calculated to rouse the jealousy of powers apt to combine, though incapable of isolated action; and if the policy of Venice should happen to offend all these powers at once, a crushing league must necessarily be the consequence.

Hitherto Venice had been allied with France, to whose friendship she owed the frontier of the Adda. Maximilian, the Pope, and Spain now united to deprive her of that alliance, and succeeded in their effort almost beyond expectation.

Julius the Second, who coveted Ravenna, Faenza, and Cervia; Maximilian, who desired possession of Friuli, Padua, Verona, and Vicenza; and Ferdinand, who sought to recover the ports of Apulia, found a willing ear at the Court of France, where they hinted that Cremona, Brescia, and Bergamo might be added to the Duchy of Milan. Venice had committed a fatal mistake in signing her last peace with Maximilian, without sufficiently consulting Louis the Twelfth. A politic regard to his own interests might have suggested to that monarch that it would be safer to preserve neighbourly relations with Venice than to open Italy to the Emperor; but offended pride and the bait of a few cities prevailed over policy, and the league of Cambrai was ratified. Venice assembled an army under Dalviano, who fought and lost the battle of Ghiaradadda near Treviglio on the 14th of May, 1509. At the news of this defeat Cremona, Bergamo, and Brescia surrendered. Faenza and Rimini were taken by the Pope, and the seaports of the kingdom of Naples yielded to King Ferdinand. Leonardo Trissino occupied Padua for the Emperor on the 6th of June, and Imperialist generals took possession of Verona and Vicenza. Maximilian himself moved from Trent on the 8th of June, and occupied the Province of Friuli, whilst one of his lieutenants, in July burnt the capital, and after a fruitless effort to obtain the surrender of the Castle of Pieve, sacked the whole of the villages of western Cadore.

In the midst of these disasters the dawn of better

times appeared to the Venetians. Treviso held out against the Imperialists and successfully defended her walls. Andrea Gritti surprised the Codalunga gate at Padua on the 17th of July, and so resumed possession of that important strategic position. Maximilian, obliged to concentrate his force for a siege, effected a breach, which he prepared to storm on the 29th of September. But he was repulsed, and retired on the following day, thus leaving the Venetians masters of the field. Either here or at Vicenza, which was soon after recovered, Francesco Vecelli fought and received a dangerous wound; but he also defeated a German captain in single combat, and amongst the Cadorines who served in the Low-lands under the Venetian flag, he was held to have behaved as a brave soldier until such time as Titian, "who loved him tenderly and feared for his life, persuaded him to return, and led him back by degrees to the study of the arts." * A cursory review of the events which followed would show how the league of Cambrai was broken up; how Ferdinand and Julius the Second turned against France, and Venice ultimately regained a great part of her lost posses-sions. But we need scarcely dwell upon this, which pertains to the domains of general history rather than illustrates the life of Titian. It is enough to note the baneful effects of the war upon the prospects of painters in general. The campaign which followed the league of Cambrai was almost as fatal to artists

* Vincenzo Vecelli's Panegyric, *u. s.*

of the Venetian school, as the siege and capture of Rome in 1527 to the masters who served under Leo the Tenth and Clement the Seventh. The first effect was to force provincial craftsmen to seek refuge in Venice, its next to narrow the field of profit in the capital and drive painters away altogether. So Pellegrino left Udine; Pordenone forsook Colalto, and Morto escaped from Feltre to find employment at Venice. So later Sebastian del Piombo withdrew to Rome, Lotto to the Romagna, and Titian to Padua and Vicenza.

Ever since that winter day in 1406, when policy induced the Venetian republic to strangle Francesco da Carrara and his two sons in prison, Padua had been subject to Venice, and served as its intellectual centre. Padua was not only celebrated for her university, but envied for her literary collections, museums, and galleries of antiquities. She was renowned for a school of painting which extended its influence from the mountains of Friuli to the gates of Milan. She had seen within her walls Donatello, the Bellini, and Andrea Mantegna; but had lost her supremacy when the greatest of her masters migrated to Mantua and Venice. Towards the close of the fifteenth and at the opening of the sixteenth century, the Paduan university, under the supervision of the bishops, was still remarkable as an academical body, but the absence of a court, and the gradual decay of a local noblesse, had reacted upon the pictorial craft, and reduced the school to a few undistinguished artists. When the city was taken by the Imperialists the university struck work and remained suspended

for an indefinite period. After the recapture of the place by Andrea Gritti, severe examples were made of the nobles who had joined the standard of Maximilian; and a long time elapsed before the miseries of fines, imprisonments, and executions were completely forgotten. It is therefore rather matter of surprise that Padua should have had the enterprise to employ artists at all than that she should have been impelled to invite men who were strangers to her in all but their names. From that time forward, indeed, we shall observe, in consulting her annals, that Padua never again became celebrated as the birthplace or residence of eminent painters, but was content to compete with Venice or Brescia for the works of Titian, Romanino, or Moretto.

Titian's journey to Padua admits us to a closer intimacy with the master than we before enjoyed. It enables us to determine with tolerable accuracy how he handled fresco—as to which the fragments at the Fondaco left us in doubt; it tells when, where, and how Titian set to work and who was his assistant. The time and place are divulged in a document from which we gather with certainty that three frescoes in the brotherhood of the Santo were finished and paid for on the 2nd of December, 1511.*

* 1511, adì 2 decẽbrio. Ricẽ jo Ticiano ducati quatro doro da la fraia ḍ M. Sō Antonio da Padova li quali mi contò ſ Antonio suo fātor ꝑ resto et compido pagamẽto ḍ li tre quadri jo ho ḍpicta sudita scuola, L. 24s. . . . Io tician di Cador Dpītore. This document is in facsimile in Gonzati (Padre Bernardo), La Basilica di S. Ant. di Padova, fol., Pad. 1854, vol. i., and is printed in the same volume at p. cxliii.

The assistant is mentioned by name in memoranda thrown by chance upon sheets of drawings.*

Mariette has translated the following from the back of a sketch by Domenico Campagnola.

"In 1511 I painted fresco in company with Titian in the Scola del Carmine, and in company we entered the Scola of Padua on the 24th of September of the same year.† "

A memorandum as follows is on the back of a drawing for the "Omnia Vanitas" in the Academy of Düsseldorf, the handwriting clearly Titian's.

"per dinari dattia M. Domenico Campagnola p suo soldo del debitto che havevo con lui io Titian Vecelli per havermi aiutatto nell' opera che ho fatta in la faciatta di Ca Corner in Pad. . ."

"To money paid to M. Domenico Campagnola in payment of the debt due to him by me Titian Vecelli for assistance in working at the front of Casa Corner in Pad[ua]."

On the same sheet are the following entries:

"L. tanti mandatti in Cador a mio nepote p. suo conto L. 30."

"To so many L.[ire] sent to Cadore to my nephew's account L. 30."

* We assume and believe that the drawings and memoranda in question are genuine.

† Reiset (F.), Notice des Dessins, &c., au Musée Impérial du Louvre, 8vo, Paris, 1866, p. 206. The drawing, once in the Crozat collection, has not been traced.

"Il Signor Marco Zacco mi stà debitore
lire cento e trenta L.130."

"Signor Marco Zacco is my debtor to the
amount of one hundred and thirty lire L.130."*

It was very natural that Titian should carefully balance accounts at a period of financial disturbance. But his shrewd nature probably made this sort of occupation very familiar to him. It was natural again that he should send money to Cadore, for this was a time when the Imperialists had devastated the country, yet it would be presuming to affirm that these memoranda are of the same date as the record of the Santo and the note of Mariette. Remarkable only is the allusion to Campagnola, who persistently recurs as the helpmate of Titian in all his labours at Padua. With reference to this artist there is much to be learnt from Paduan annals, but in the matter of his birth and death the usual darkness prevails. His best claim to attention is his connection with Titian, whose style as a colourist and designer of landscapes, in spite of bad drawing and worse composition, he successfully imitated. There is some doubt as to whether he was a Paduan or a Venetian, and it is curious that we hear of him first when Titian comes to Padua. But from 1511 to 1564 he was entrusted with numerous commissions in that city; and there is testimony independent of that

* This drawing is on grey paper, and was purchased at the close of last century by Mr. Krahe, Director of the Düsseldorf Academy, at Rome.

already produced to show that he painted in the Cornaro Palace and in the brotherhood of the Santo.*

It would have been strange if a man of Alvise Cornaro's enterprising character had allowed an artist of Titian's eminence to visit Padua without exercising his skill. Unhappily what the master did for him has been lost. Cornaro was a man of mature age at the time of Titian's coming. He was a reformed rake who had written an essay on sobriety and followed his own precepts with such effect as to prepare him for the privileges of a centenarian. Though cut off by the fault of one of his ancestors from the rank of the noblesse, he was by birth a patrician. Precluded by accident from public employment, yet in wealth and station surpassing many of his contemporaries, he varied his leisure with sober pleasures and study. He kept open house at Padua, and had a special welcome for men of science, letters and art; receiving once amongst others the admirable Crichton, whose versatility and breadth of knowledge he seems to have emulated. Accomplished as a singer, he also wrote a comedy and a treatise on architecture. A first rate sportsman, he was at home on all subjects appertaining to agriculture, draining, dykes and fortifications. Waste lands were brought into cultivation by his efforts, and he planned the regulation of the lagoons. Having visited Rome with his favourite architect Falconetto,

* Morelli's Anon. 11; Ridolfi, Marav. i. 118, ii. 265; Brandolese, Pitt. di Padova, 8vo, Padova, 1795; and Selvatico (P.), Guida di Padova, 8vo, Pad. 1869.

he proposed to divert the course of the Tiber by a cutting at the Ponte Molle, thus forestalling by three centuries the plans of our day.* Visitors to Padua seldom fail to look at the palace which he built, and which fell by inheritance to the Giustiniani family. They find the name of Falconetto and the date of 1524 inscribed on an inner portico; but they also perceive that many parts of the edifice were taken down at different periods, and they are unable for that reason to discover what Titian planned, Campagnola executed, and Cornaro paid for.

Equally unknown, though perhaps more legendary, the frescoes with which Titian is said to have decorated the walls of a room in his house at Padua, have also perished. According to Ridolfi they were the originals or repetitions of engravings for which Titian himself had drawn the blocks, and which, if we believe Vasari, he published under the name of the Triumph of Faith in 1508.† If they ever existed, and in any way resembled these prints in rugged force and cleverness of drawing, they deserved to be classed above everything that Titian left in any of the sacred edifices of Padua. The prints themselves exhibit the master as challenging the memory of Mantegna, and representing a religious triumph to contrast with that of Cæsar which adorned one of the Mantuan palaces. They show us Christ drawn in a car by the Doctors of

* For a sketch of Alvise Cornaro, and a statement of the literature concerning him, see Cicogna's Isc. Ven. vi. pp. 685, and following. Cornaro was born in 1467, and died in 1565.

† Tizianello's Anon., p. ix; Ridolfi, Marav. i. 201; Vasari, xiii. 21. The prints were published in ten sheets, marked from A to J.

the Church, preceded by Adam and Eve, their progeny, and the patriarchs and sybils, and followed by the whole army of martyrs and confessors. Roughly drawn, and still more roughly cut on wood, they are full of impulsive energy, and they embody life with such exuberance and grandeur as justifies an ardent Catholic in saying they are masterpieces worthy of a Christian painter.*

Titian once complained to the envoy of Alfonzo d'Este at Venice, that Ferrara was an inconvenient place to visit professionally, because it lay so far away from models and artistic properties.† In truth he clung passionately to certain forms of female beauty, which he repeated with slight varieties in many pictures, and he felt himself deprived—as it were—of part of himself when he had not these forms to appeal to. The same inconvenience would naturally strike him when moving from Venice, and leaving his disciples at home. After he became famous and felt that he was courted, he did not hesitate to travel with three or four assistants; but in earlier years he was probably deterred from this course by fear of incurring expense. A common practice of master-artists in these years was to engage journeymen at the place of their temporary residence; and we may thus explain the companionship of Campagnola at Padua. But this practice was never without serious disadvantage,

* Rio, A. F., De l'Art Chrétien, nouvelle éd. 8vo, Paris, 1867; tom. iv. p. 183.

† Campori (Marchese Giuseppe), "Tiziano e gli Estensi" in reprint from the Nuova Antologia, 8vo, Flor., Nov. 1874, p. 16.

unless the master resolved to counterbalance the feebleness of his helpmate, by additional care on his own part. The questions presenting themselves for consideration under such circumstances might be these. Was it worth while to paint conscientiously in a provincial town; was it necessary to do the best for a price not the best? It is difficult to determine in what way Titian would have answered these questions had they been put to him. But it is perfectly certain that when he laboured at the Carmine he left almost all the work to Campagnola; and when he painted at the Santo he trusted enough to that artist to make the "alloy in the metal," more perhaps than the brethren may have bargained for.

The Carmine injures Titian's fame for this reason, because its walls are in a state of great dilapidation, and its frescoes in an advanced stage of decay; but making allowance even for this, a master of his talent ought to have done better. The subject represented in the only wall painting assignable to him, is the meeting of Joachim and Anna. We see the road which the saint has just followed, winding round a bluff covered with vegetation, and leading out over a plain to the foot of a hill crowned by buildings. To the right the servant kneels with his staff in his hand, whilst Joachim strides up to Anna, who takes him to her arms. Three females witness the meeting in front of a palace of fine architectural proportions. There is nothing abler in the picture than the landscape, the figure of the servant, and the head of Joachim, who smiles happily as he looks into his wife's face, but

even this is hasty work unworthy of the master, whilst the rest is beneath his level altogether. What distinguishes Campagnola in other frescoes of this series, is a bold rapidity of hand, and a rough realism, which betrays itself in coarseness of face and squatness of shape, or defective drawing and modelling, harsh colour and incomprehensible drapery. There is not one of the figures in the meeting of Joachim and Anna which does not exhibit some of these defects; for that of the servant, if more harmonious in tone than the rest, is unfortunately curt in proportions, and Joachim, though fine in head, is weighted with drapery of superabundant and meaningless fold.*

Titian's contempt of the judgment of his provincial contemporaries is less apparent but not less real at the Santo than at the Carmine; and we are involuntarily reminded of Donatello, whose chance it was in a previous age to produce at Padua some of the finest creations of his chisel. Donatello confessed that he

* This fresco has always been assigned to Titian (Brandolese, Pitture di Padova, 190). It and all its companions were injured in the course of the present century by an accident. The Austrians occupied the floor above the "Scuola" as a barrack. They allowed the roof to fall out of repair; the rain found its way in and washed the colouring matter from the pictures. Being originally painted in haste, the work threatened to disappear altogether. The landscape is much faded; the mantle of St. Anna is changed from blue to leaden grey, the tunic from brown to green and black. All the figures, nearly of life size, are bleached and spotty. The short squat forms of Campagnola are most conspicuous in the females to the left behind St. Anna—one in yellow, between two in red and black respectively. His vulgar realism is apparent in the peasant face of St. Anna, where even a mole is depicted. Very poor is the drapery of St. Joachim, raw in its yellow and brick-red tints.

felt injuriously the influence of fulsome and ceaseless praise, and wished he were home to get a little abuse instead of losing his skill under the flatteries of his friends.* It would seem as if Titian had been over-praised before producing anything, for his work at the Santo reveals the weariness and impatience that an artist might feel who was eager to rid himself of an irksome and uncongenial duty. Yet it was not the subject that palled upon him. In composing the designs he performed his task with a racy spirit; losing force and courage only when called upon to transfer his drawings to the wall.

The first fresco of the series at the Santo is that of which Titian's original sketch has been preserved. It represents St. Anthony granting speech to an infant that it might testify to the innocence of its mother—a composition beautifully conceived, and conveying with rare force the ideas of instant emotion, expression and action. The child sits on the hands of St. Anthony, who kneels as he raises the babe to the presence of its incensed parent. Masterly is the contrast between the surprise of the father and the dignified calm of the mother, who stands—a grand matron grandly draped—in serene consciousness of her innocence at her jealous husband's side. Rapidly and cleverly the spectators of the scene are thrown on to the paper with a pen and tinted in with water colour, the hands and feet indicated with a few lines, all revealing the thorough

* Vas. iii. 258.

knowledge of the draughtsman.* With some varieties of head-dress, the figures of the drawing are transferred to the wall; but how different is the contour, how imperfect are the extremities! We follow the hurried artist or his assistant as he slurs over the difficulties of his work; handling the brush with freedom and breadth indeed, but with unwelcome neglect, balancing his colours with sufficient skill to obtain a scale of harmony without a wave of discord, but producing tones opaque in shadow, sloppy in transitions, and—especially in the distance—without those charms of brightness and atmosphere which enchant us in Titian's oil pictures. Of great attraction is the group of women to the right behind the mother. Brilliant and quite Giorgionesque in form a youth to the left holding in his hands the hems of his white mantle, two primaries admirably balanced with a secondary in the red cap, the striped red and yellow hose, and the green jacket, a true counterpart, as regards excellence, of the brother of the Calza on the Fondaco at Venice. Giorgionesque again is the bearded man just behind St. Anthony, and a younger spectator close by him pointing to the Saint as he kneels and presents the child. The draperies are in all respects satisfactory, but these exceptional beauties scarcely compensate for more prominent defects; and we miss beyond everything the sun, the vivid light and shade and the landscapes which give a charm even to feeble works of Titian.

* This drawing was one of those exhibited at the Manchester Exhibition.

Campagnola was a celebrated and able painter in his day, one of the few men indeed who worthily represented landscape as an art relying altogether on itself.* Yet neither his nor Titian's skill in this aspect is visible; most of the *dramatis personæ* are seen in front of a building with an arched gateway guarded at one of its angles by the statue of a saint, and the view to the right is only bounded by an earthen bank and a few trees.†

The second of Titian's compositions is treated with great freedom but with more care than its predecessor. Its lines in groups and distance are grand and harmonious. The dead youth is depicted who cut off his leg because—in his passion—he had kicked his mother. A woman raises the shoulders of the corpse, which lies at length on the foreground, whilst the mother appeals in her grief to St. Anthony. Behind her, a female tells the story to her friends, amongst whom a bearded man in a yellow robe is prominent. St. Anthony tucks up the skirt of his frock with the left hand, which is lost in the folds of his sleeve; and extending the right with appropriate gesture bids the mother be comforted. Behind him a knight in steel armour has donned his helmet and dropped his shield, the white face of

* One of the best things of Campagnola was a series of landscapes in distemper with which he covered the walls of a palace at Padua, inhabited by Marco Mantova. See Morelli's Anon., p. 25.

† We must recollect that this and other frescoes of the series has suffered from damp and re-painting, to which we may attribute in part the darker and more opaque surfaces, and a certain dull monotony in the whole work.

which relieves the grey dress of the friar. To the right are two fine forms of men, one with a shaven crown, another in a red cap and a red tunic with grey sleeves. But a peculiar feature of this fresco is its background. Divided sharply by the tall trunk and sparse foliage of a tree immediately behind St. Anthony, it gives us a view of the towers and embattled walls of a city bowered in trees and covering a slope falling to the seashore. In the fields to the right a shepherd tends his flock; behind the tower, to the left, a grand dolomite crag rises with its needles and slabs into the sky, and an island dips its blue and saw-shaped form into the sea. Such a scene in one of Titian's canvases would be enchanting. The fresco gives little more than the lines, and still sets us awondering at the cleverness with which the nature of Cadore is combined with that of the Greek or Dalmatian coast. Much art is displayed in balancing one figure with the other in broad contrast of light and shadow; the movement of the faces being so conceived as to throw one alternately into darkness. The scales of tone are calculated as before, the head of a man with copious hair stooping to look over the Saint's arm at the prostrate youth is quite in the character of Giorgione, whilst many of the others are grand in shape and expressiveness. Clever from its suggestiveness is the turn of the knight's head, whose glance is thrown abroad as if scanning the approach of a crowd visible to no one but himself. Characteristic is the superior beauty of male over female form, for here the women are

necessarily types drawn from a class of low social condition.*

Of the third fresco, which has lost almost all its attraction in respect of tone, we could almost wish that it had not been conceived or executed by Titian, so mannered is the action, so theatrical the grouping, so conventional its whole surroundings. A jealous husband grimly stands over his wife, whose prostrate form is at his feet, stabbed with a blow from the stiletto which he still holds over her. In the distance St. Anthony pardons the repentant murderer, and assures him that his partner has been restored to life. The two groups are separated by a shapeless mound of earth, which looks more like the shifting scene of a theatre than anything that a votary of nature like Titian ever painted.†

Sir Joshua Reynolds has said that whatever Titian touched, however naturally mean and habitually familiar, by a kind of magic he invested with grandeur and importance.‡ Nothing can be more

* This fresco is engraved, but reversed, in Lefebre's series, called "Opera Selectiora," 1682.

† In all these frescoes the figures are of life size. The whole series was "restored" in autumn of 1748 by a Paduan artist named Francesco Zanoni, who, before undertaking the work, reported that the frescoes had already been repaired by painting over cracks and blisters with oil colour. He was ordered to remove the dust and as much of the oil paint as he could. Since then water has percolated behind several frescoes from an opening in the roof, and two of them, the dead youth with his cut leg, and the murderer of his wife, have been greatly injured; the latter especially being in such a state as almost to suggest fears for its existence. Compare Gonzati, Basilica, I., cxliv. and Selvatico, Guida di Padova, 1869, p. 31.

‡ XIth Discourse.

true, yet Titian seldom imported so little magic into any work as into these pictures at Padua, and we retire from their contemplation questioning his power to cope as a wall painter with Giorgione, and inquiring whether it be true, as his flatterers said, that he carried off the palm at the Fondaco de' Tedeschi. No doubt the frescoes at Padua are the creations of a master and a colourist, yet the same master did many times better in oil, and unless we suppose that the walls of the Santo are so changed as to have lost all trace of their original beauty, we must believe either that Titian trusted too much to his assistants, or that he disliked fresco as a craft altogether. That he should prefer easel painting to every other form of pictorial labour, we might fully expect from a genuine disciple of the Venetian school. That he did prefer it there seems to be no manner of doubt, and thus we come to the conclusion familiar to the student of the comparative history of Italian art, that Venice in the person of her greatest craftsman was so far below Florence that she could not produce a fresco painter equal to Andrea del Sarto, whilst Florence on the other hand never produced a colourist equal to Titian. With the solitary exception of Pordenone there is not a single artist of the Venetian States whose skill in fresco is above the average. But no one would think of comparing even Pordenone with del Sarto; whilst if we pit one masterpiece against the other, del Sarto's "Dispute of the Trinity" at the Pitti against the "St. Mark" which Titian, after his return to Venice, completed in San Spirito, we shall perceive that the

Florentine was but a master of sleight-of-hand, the Venetian a real magician.

Yet no one could have forecast the future condition of Venetian art if events had taken a different turn from that which history has recorded. In Venice fresco was accepted as a temporary decoration. Its use in the Venetian provinces was more common in proportion as its chance of lasting was greater. Had it been Titian's fate to wander on the mainland from church to church and paint never-ending aisles and choirs in emulation of Pordenone, he would have overcome his dislike and mastered his inexperience. But it was otherwise determined. On his return to Venice, after finishing his labours at Padua, he stopped at Vicenza, whither there is every reason to believe he was accompanied by Domenico Campagnola,* and there he produced a fresco of the "Judgment of Solomon," which did not survive the century.† He then settled down to his old practice in the capital, and though it is reported that his first duty on arriving was the decoration of the front of a palace belonging to the Grimani family,‡ he aban-

* Boschini, in the Gioielli pitt. di Vicenza, 12mo, Vicenza, 1676, notes fragments of fresco on the front of the Palace of the Podestà, of which it was doubtful whether they were by Titian or Campagnola (pp. 34–5). He also notes a fresco by Campagnola (p. 74) under a portico near Santa Corona of Vicenza. But Campagnola also came to Venice, and there are still two canvases by him in San Michele of Murano.

† Vas. xiii. 22, 45. Ridolfi, Marav. i. 201, 298. The fresco was in the loggia in which the courts of justice sat. It was taken down by Palladio when the loggia was rebuilt, and Malvasia notes the scandal which the loss of Titian's fresco caused.

‡ Vasari (xiii. 22) speaks too

doned wall painting that he might give his time exclusively to canvases and panels.

vaguely of the "Grimani family" to enable us to discover what branch of it he refers to. There are no remains of frescoes on any private palace in Venice. But perhaps Vasari meant to allude to the portico of the Grimani Palace at St. Ermagora. where, Ridolfi says (Marav. i. 200), Titian painted trophies and two figures of virtues; and see as to this, History of North Ital. Painting, ii. pp. 140, where these frescoes are described as works of Giorgione. Consult also Maier, A., Della Imitazione pitt., 8vo, Ven. 1818, pp. 292, and following.

CHAPTER V.

Titian's Return to Venice after the Peace.—Condition of the City and Status of the Painter at this Time.—St. Mark: an Altar-piece at the Salute.—Culture of Letters; the Aldine Club and Titian.—Bembo causes Titian to be asked to Rome.—Navagero prevents him.—Titian applies for Official Employment.—His Quarrel with Bellini and his Faction.—The Hall of Public Council.—Workshop at San Samuele.—Negotiations with the Council of Ten.—The Sanseria and its Duties.—Titian's first Canvas in the Hall of Council.—Ferrara.—Alfonzo d'Este and his Treatment of Raphael and Titian.—The first Bacchanal.—Relations to Ariosto and first visit to Ferrara.—Correspondence with Alfonzo, and Alfonzo's visit to Venice.

THE quiet of Titian's stay at Padua was disturbed at its close by news of disasters in Cadore. About the middle of October, 1511, the Emperor's lieutenant, Regendorff, seized the passes of the Alps, took Bottestagno and summoned Pieve to surrender. After burning several villages which had weathered earlier storms, he sat down before the castle of Pieve, which stood out a bombardment and on the 7th of December surrendered. It is not without emotion that we read even now the message sent on the 21st of December by Cadorine envoys to Venice. The Doge was informed that the men of Cadore had met in the ruins of the castle, having no place in the town to which they could retire for cover. They were determined to rebuild the castle, and desirous of being favoured with a captain or *proveditore*, more

experienced and intrepid than the last; but in the meanwhile they begged to say that they were living in huts and caverns and suffering from want of the commonest necessaries of life.*

Titian's return to Venice probably coincided with the truce which temporarily put an end to hostilities with Maximilian in April, 1512. Though her finances were much exhausted and her possessions sensibly curtailed, Venice might still look with some sort of equanimity on the distant battle fields, upon which the French, the Germans, the Spaniards, and the Swiss, contended. The capital at least enjoyed immunity from the presence of those enemies who wasted and destroyed the fairest cities of the mainland without effecting any permanent conquests, and her supremacy on the Adriatic being practically unchallenged at the time, Venice might console herself with the pursuit of commerce which was the mainstay of her treasury, and—with the salt-pans—her chief source of profit. That a better tone and more hopeful prospects gave heart to the Doge Loredano and his council is apparent from the splendour of the procession which was then instituted for the first time, the procession or "*Andata*," in which the Doge and Senators after meeting in San Marco, proceeded in state to Santa Marina to give thanks to Heaven for the recovery of Padua. Every year for centuries this ceremony was performed on the 17th of July, giving a measure by its importance

* Ciani, *u. s.*, ii. pp. 223–4.

and solemnity of the value which the Republic attached to her supremacy on the Venetian Main.* We can fancy that there was a tendency in every person and every corporation to return thanks to the Almighty both directly and through the intercession of St. Mark for the rescue of the State from the dangers of the league of Cambrai, and there can be little doubt that we owe to some such feeling as this the picture of St. Mark enthroned amidst saints, which Titian now completed for the canons of San Spirito in Isola. At a much later period, when Sansovino became famous in the north, and the canons employed him to rebuild their church, Titian also painted the descent of the Holy Spirit, and the ceiling pieces which represented the death of Abel, the sacrifice of Abraham, and David's contest with Goliath. But these pictures are wide as the years asunder which elapsed between 1512 and 1541. The whole series taken to the church of the Salute after the suppression of San Spirito in 1656 is still to be seen in something like its original state, and we mark with interest, though without surprise, how closely Titian still followed the precepts of Palma and Giorgione before he acquired the sublime art that gave his works a grand character of originality in the later period of his pictorial career.†

* Sansovino, Ven. descr. 504; Cicogna, Isc. Ven. i. 333.

† Compare Vas. xiii. 22; Boschini, Le Ric. Min., 12mo, Ven. 1674; Sest. di D. Duro, pp. 25–6; Ridolfi, Marav. i. 198; and Zanetti, Pit. Ven., p. 143. It is also to be borne in mind that the church of San Spirito is not the same as that of Spirito Santo, where Titian also painted an altar-piece. (Sansov. Ven. desc., p. 272.)

As a master ambitious of leading in his profession, Titian's position was now materially improved; partly by the growing incapacity of Giovanni Bellini to compass the duty entrusted to his hands, partly by the decline of Carpaccio's power and the withdrawal of Sebastian Luciani, but mainly by the death of Giorgione, to whose practice he succeeded almost without a contest. It is evidence of the depth and extent of the influence which Giorgione wielded upon his more fortunate competitor that Titian remained even now under the charm of his style; and it was noticed by Vasari, as it might be noticed in our day by any one seriously studying the masterpieces of those times, that the St. Mark of the Salute is Giorgionesque enough in treatment to be taken for a work of Giorgione.* In so far as St. Mark was the patron saint of Venice we might, in 1512, have anticipated such an embodiment of him as would express an humble but earnest hope that all might yet go well with the Republic. Titian's St. Mark is quite above such thoughts. He sits majestic and defiant, looking out upon the world as if the book of laws, on which he rests his hand, should be dictated to the universe. Martyrdom and violent death as suggested by St. Sebastian, plague as symbolized by St. Roch, are ills that have been overcome, and St. Cosmo or St. Damian, who stand in converse to the left, are merely there to record the fact.† We heard Vasari's reproach: "Titian

* Vasari, xiii. 22.

† The plague raged at Venice during the whole year 1510, and carried off no less than 20,000 persons. Sansovino, Cronico ad ann.

scorns the Antique"! But St. Mark at the Salute is in direct contradiction of this. The regal chair, the classic shaft, are both antique; and the saint himself is like a Roman Emperor, forming, with the more realistic figures in the foreground, a contrast the more remarkable as it is more unexpected. We may compare the composition with Giorgione's Madonna of Castelfranco, and note how traditional regularity is exchanged for accidental picturesqueness. The carpet no longer hangs with careful flatness from a rectangular plinth. It falls with modulated droop from the rounded shaft, displays in light and shade its stripes of red and green, and yields a variegated effect of surface. St. Sebastian's loins are not tightly bound in a hip-cloth; but a copious mass of white is twisted in a single knot, leaving a corner to trail upon the chessboard ground. The air, so mild and so beautifully modulated in sky and cloud that it seems endowed with a mysterious inner motion, is admirably toned to meet the deep shadows cast over the high pillars to the right; and the broad flow of light which falls upon St. Sebastian, is taken on to the floor to rise again in a radiant current, up the form of St. Damian to the breast of St. Mark. The two groups in front are solidly parted by a large expanse of shadow that falls upon the floor and lies—a bed of gloom—on the plinth of the shaft. Dress is made to second the projection of the under form in a manner seldom surpassed at Venice. The red tunic lies on the broad chest of St. Mark, the blue mantle stands out on the knees relieved by the deep ultra-

marine of the less prominent folds. It would seem as if Titian had learnt by heart the maxims of "monumental drapery" laid down by Fra Bartolommeo in the full tide of his manhood; and who knows but he had met and heard this sublime master as he lingered at Venice in 1508. From the Frate he might also have learnt those subtle varieties of movement and gesture which distinguish St. Sebastian and St. Roch: the first, young, handsome as a woman, the life blood all in him, in spite of his wounds, the limbs and torso nature itself even in their disproportions; the second, graceful in the melancholy bend of the head or gesture of the hand pointing at the plague boil;—the lines varied in both yet harmonized to a perfect chord. Let us conceive all this heightened in effect by a scale of colours as mellow in tone as they are polished in surface, and we have a picture second in delicacy only to the Bacchanal of Ferrara, reminiscent still of Giorgione in richness, or of Palma in softness, yet verging upon that perfection which soon made Titian so greatly superior to both.* If at Venice in the earlier days Vecelli

* It is hardly doubtful that this beautiful panel, now in the Sacristy of the Salute at Venice, was in a much more appropriate light and better seen at San Spirito in Isola, for which it was executed, than it is at present. The panel is arched at top; the figures are under life size. The face of St. Mark is of a type which Titian, unconsciously perhaps, inclined to repeat with varieties. We see it in modified forms in the St. Peter at Antwerp, or at the Frari (Pesaro altarpiece). St. Cosmo, with the vase, looks up to St. Mark in an attitude recalling Fra Bartolommeo. The picture is one which must have affected Van Dyck; it is more freely handled than the earlier "Christ" of "The Tribute Money," yet almost as careful; and the study expended on hands.

had had but few isolated examples of classic art to look at; now that he had been at Padua and visited the Paduan country he had had occasion to feast his eyes on the numerous master-pieces by which Mantegna's spirit had been spell-bound. But he saw more than these; he studied imposing creations of Donatello and Mantegna, the two masters whose genius transformed the Venetian school. Nor is it too much to believe that he learnt a lesson at the Eremitani which he never forgot; if we consider that the St. Mark of the Salute though far away as yet from the bold system of fore-shortening displayed in the later ceiling pieces of San Spirito already embodies principles of linear perspective, and appears as much more bold in its application of those principles as it is more bold in the treatment of flesh or balanced light and shade.

It is no wonder now, that Titian should have felt ambitious of a higher position at Venice, no wonder that the public to which his works appealed had become larger. It was not only that his talents were recognized in a wider sphere, but that circumstances tended to fit the Venetian public for a better appreciation of the sublime and beautiful in literature and art. Few but those acquainted with the history of printing and letters are aware of the great activity which prevailed at Venice, before and after the league

and feet is very good in its results. Unhappily, we have to note some retouching, *ex. gr.*, on the back of the neck of St. Cosmo; the toes of the right, and the ankle of the left foot of St. Sebastian. The violet stockings of St. Roch are turned into black stains. There is an engraving of this piece by G. Wagner, and a photograph by Naya of Venice.

of Cambrai. Safe—as a haven—from the invasions of enemies, Venice had long been recognized as an admirable centre in which to carry on printing operations. Early in the fifteenth century, the presses of John of Speyer had been set up. In the short space of thirty years they were succeeded by those of Janson and Andrea of Asola, into whose business Aldus Manutius entered as a partner.* Under the vigorous management of this active and learned man, Venice acquired a literature, not national indeed, since a national literature is not to be created in half a century, but classical in so far as it revived the classics of Italy and of Greece, without ignoring such efforts as contemporary men of letters could make. It is surprising to observe how rapidly volumes of every sort were issued from the Aldine presses within the first eight years that elapsed after 1502.† The principal aim of Aldus was to promote the circulation of Greek books, for which he cast new types; but he took all literature within his purview; and beginning with a Greek grammar and Aristotle's Organon, followed them up with Bembo's Excursion to Etna and Benedetti's diary of the Caroline war. We then mark the publication in close proximity as to date of the licentious and pedantic Hypnerotomachia Poliphili and the letters of St. Catherine of Sienna;

* Consult for this and other particulars with reference to Aldus Manutius and the Aldine Academy, Mr. Ambroise Firmin Didot's admirable work, Alde Manuce et l'Hellénisme à Venise. 8vo, Paris, 1875. See also Cicogna, Isc. Ven. vi. 173, and following.

† This is the date of a privilege granted to Aldus by the Doge, given in full in Didot's Alde Manuce, p. 479.

the sonnets of Petrarch and the polyglot Pentateuch, Thucydides and Dante, Demosthenes' speeches, and Bembo's Asolani. There was something in this for every reader and every taste; much to suit a period of loose morals but of free inquiry—a period which may be presumed to have been less dangerous and less harmful to mankind than the later one when morals were not better, but vice wore a cloak, whilst the mind was fettered by a censorship and the Inquisition. Such a state of activity as that described in the foregoing sentences required a combination of forces of the rarest kind. It obliged Aldus to gather about him almost all the literary men of the age, and led him to found the Aldine Academy, which enrolled amongst its members not only Venetians such as Sabellico, Pietro Bembo, Andrea Navagero, Sanuto and Ramusius, but strangers like Linacre and Erasmus, and joint representatives of literature and art like Fra Giocondo.

The language of converse in this club was Greek,* not only for the sake of the classic tone, but out of compliment to the Cretan Musurus and his compeers, who flying from the terrors of Ottoman rule, came over to settle in Venice or Padua, or out of a necessity for cultivating the only tongue known to compositors exclusively Greek. Here we may believe all questions were discussed that swayed the public opinion of the time, and we cannot doubt that those appertaining to art had their share; nor can we hesitate to think that

* Didot's Alde Manuce, p. 438.

where Fra Giocondo sat, who was so long believed to have planned the Fondaco de' Tedeschi, there also the name of Titian and his contemporaries was heard.* But there is no reason for doubting that the Aldines were in distinct connection with the artists of their day. Professionally, Aldus was in occasional contact with Giulio Campagnola the master, it was thought, of Domenico, who worked for a time under Titian at Padua and Vicenza.† Socially he must have been acquainted with the Bellini and their pupils. But if not Aldus, certainly Bembo and Navagero,

> "Ambo florentes ætatibus, Aones ambo,
> Et cantare pares et respondere parati,"

were well informed as to the progress of the artistic world around them.

Of Bembo's visits to the Bellini we have some historical account:‡ his knowledge of Titian is equally certain, though not so copiously illustrated. Like Navagero he was a man of letters before he turned to politics; for he not only published his Ætna and Asolani with Aldus, but he edited some of the Aldine classics. Navagero was a poet, a speaker, and an author, before he was employed in the diplomatic service of his country, but at the time of which we

* Morelli, in his notes to the Anonimo Zen. (p. 241), cites the following distich from a manuscript ascribed to Pietro Contarini (1517):

> "Teutonicum mirare forum, spectabile fama,
> Nuper Jucundi nobile fratris opus."

† The fact is stated in Aldus' Will, at full length in Didot's Alde, *u. s.*, 487. See also Morelli's Anon., p. 11.

‡ See Bembo's letters in Gaye, Carteggio Inedito, 8vo, Firenze, 1834, ii. 76; and Darco Pitture di Mantova, folio, Mantova, 1857, ii. 60, 61.

are treating, he was not exclusively occupied with literary labour. It was not enough for his ambition to have collated Pindar, Cicero, Quintilian and Lucretius, he was also the orator who read before the Doge and Senate a speech in praise of Catherine Cornaro, and was to read in 1515 an oration to the memory of Bartholomew D'Alviano. Towards the close of 1512, or at the opening of 1513, Bembo was in Rome, Navagero at Venice, the first courting favour with the Medici, the second trusting to Venice for promotion. Suddenly Julius the Second died. The conclave met in March, and Bembo was made secretary with Sadolet to Giovanni de' Medici, now raised to the pontifical chair, under the name of Leo the Tenth.* Matters which occurred a few days subsequent to this event, prove that Bembo and Navagero were both even then aware of the promise of Titian's fame. They show that however much the Humanists or Hellenists might consider themselves above artists generally, there was still a point of palpable contact and feeling between them; or at any rate that the former were alive to the lustre which painters of high capacity might shed on an intelligent patron or a wise state. It is certain that Bembo proposed to Titian to accept service under Leo the Tenth, equally certain that Navagero dissuaded him from taking that step.† It is, we may fear, impossible to determine whether Bembo's scheme originated in his own mind or was suggested by some observations of the Pope.

* Bembi (Petri), Opera, supra. lib. xii. p. 519.

† Vas. xiii. 27; Dolce Dialogo, 67.

Giovanni de' Medici, once an exile at Venice, had probably lived too long at Rome to know anything of Vecelli.* But supposing this to be so, he would still be accessible to the proposal which Bembo now made to him. Navagero on the other hand would probably have pondered over the well-known fact that Giovanni Bellini could not be expected to live long, and that after his death, there would be no master of any account left to take charge of the duties of painting Doges' likenesses, or finishing the canvases which still awaited completion in the Hall of Great Council. The details are unhappily lost, but the facts remain. We know that Bembo's offer was made. Its refusal —at the instigation of Navagero—is strongly confirmed by the wording of the following petition presented by Titian, and read on the 31st of May, 1513, before the council of ten.

"I, Titian of Cadore, having studied painting from childhood upwards, and desirous of fame rather than profit, wish to serve the Doge and Signori, rather than his Highness the Pope and other Signori, who in past days, and even now, have urgently asked to employ me: I am therefore anxious, if it should appear feasible, to paint in the Hall of Council, beginning, if it please their sublimity, with the canvas of the battle on the side towards the Piazza, which is so difficult that no one as yet has had courage to attempt

* Giovanni de' Medici is mentioned as an influential cardinal at Rome in the "Relations of Paolo Capello in 1500 and 1510." Relazioni, *u. s.*, vol. iii. pp. 5 & 23.

it. I should be willing to accept for my labour any reward that might be thought proper, but being studious only of honour and wishing for a moderate competence, I beg to ask for the first broker's patent for life that shall be vacant in the Fontego di Tedeschi, irrespective of all promised reversions of such patent, and on the same conditions, or with the same charges and exemptions as are conceded to Missier Juan Belin, viz.: two youths as assistants, to be paid by the Salt office, and all colours and necessaries: in return for which I promise to do the work above-named with such speed and excellence as will satisfy the Signori, to whom I beg to be humbly recommended."

The chiefs of the Council on the day in question, were Girolamo Contarini, Michael de Lezze, and Giovanni Venier. They moved and carried a resolution "accepting Titian's offer with all the conditions attached to it." Supplementing this on the 8th of June, a further resolution was engrossed by order of Pietro Leoni, Girolamo Priuli, and Andrea Magno requiring the "proveditori al Sal" to prepare necessaries for Titian in the manner customary till then with respect to Bellini, and pay his two "youths" at the rate of four ducats a month on proof being given that they had actually set hand to the work entrusted to them.*

And now there began a quarrel between the

* The records are in Lorenzi, pp. 157–8.

owners of old and—it might be thought—vested, rights in the Hall of Great Council, and one artist in whom the guildsmen of Venice already recognized a formidable, if not quite an invincible rival—a quarrel of which, at this distance of time we cannot follow the windings, but which reveals itself to us in all its breadth in the fierce and heavy blows that fell upon each side alternately. Like a petard bursting unawares and hoisting every one within its reach, these decrees of the council of ten shed consternation amongst the painters of the Ducal Palace. For upwards of thirty-three years—we have to recollect—Giovanni Bellini had been employed by the Venetian state. During that time, he and his brother, with occasional competition from Vivarini, Carpaccio, and others, had completed two canvases in the western and six or seven canvases in the northern wall of the Hall of Great Council. The spaces along the south wall had not been changed since the days of Gentile da Fabriano, Pisanello, and Guariento, whose vast fresco of the Coronation still covered the eastern face above the ducal throne. For a long time Giovanni Bellini had had a broker's patent in the Fondaco, with considerable privileges, and no one had ever been placed in a position to rival him since the days of Luigi Vivarini. Even after it had been found requisite in 1507, to press the completion of Vivarini's unfinished canvas, and compose pictures for two vacant spaces in addition, Carpaccio had been adjudged competent to paint one of these canvases, with the assistance of Girolamo and Vittor di Matteo; but Giovanni Bellini had been specially

directed to superintend their work,* and so remained the acknowledged chief of all the Venetian painters. To a man in such a position, however much his power might be impaired by age, the promotion of Titian as a rival, must have been an offence and a blow, and we shall soon perceive that, old as he was, Bellini was not disposed to allow his new competitor to supersede him without a struggle.

As early as June, Sanuto writes, Titian had been appointed to work in the Hall of Great Council on the same conditions as the Bellini and Carpaccio.† Permission had been given to him to set up a workshop at San Samuele, where buildings formerly owned by the Duke of Milan were in the hands of the State. Here Bartolommeo Bon the town architect had had his dwelling,‡ here Titian lodged and kept his assistants, Antonio Buxei, and Lodovico di Giovanni.§ Here too he had made the sketch, or "model" as it was then called, of the picture which was to hang in the Hall of Great Council. Situated at the bend of the Grand Canal, due west from the Piazza of San Marco, the workshop was equidistant from the Doge's Palace and the bridge of Rialto, being easily accessible by the Canal Grande, and so situated that

* Lorenzi, p. 142.

† Sanuto, Diario, vol. xvi. p. 287, June 31 (?), 1513, extracted by Cicogna, MS. annot. to Morelli's Anonimo, *u. s.* See also Ciani Storia, parte ii. p. 299.

‡ Lorenzi, p. 187.

§ Lodovico di Giovanni, or Di Zuane, had been Giovanni Bellini's assistant at the Council Hall in 1508. His salary was then two ducats a month (Lorenzi, 142, 145–6). In 1509 there was a complaint against him that he had left his work without leave, and he was superseded. Ib. 150.

a gondola might row the artist to the mole or a barge take him up with his baggage and land him in the mouth of the Po.* For some time it would seem nothing came of Bellini's opposition. Titian's assistants drew their monthly pay from the Salt office, and Titian himself began the "picture" at the Hall of Great Council, but he had not had time to proceed much further when his enemies closed upon him. On the 24th of March, 1514, the council of ten revoked its decree of the previous May, and formally declared that Titian was not to receive his broker's patent on the first vacancy, but must wait his turn, and that in the meantime his journeymen should be struck off the pay list of the Salt office.† Giovanni Bellini who had previously exhibited his Madonna of San Giovanni Crisostomo and practically shown the greatness of his artistic power, no doubt felt his pride satisfied by this victory; for though we know not the mode of his proceeding, it is plain that he had succeeded for the time in ousting his opponent; and he remained for the nonce the great master and presiding genius of Venetian painting. But Titian, if beaten and repulsed, had also compassed something towards acquiring a new position. The salary of his journeymen had been disallowed; his prospects of a broker's patent had become more distant than before; but he had neither been deprived of his right to the patent nor of the lease of his workshop, and we shall find that he never ceased to reside at

* See *postea*.

† The records are in Lorenzi, pp. 159, 160.

San Samuele, until he was induced sixteen years later to hire a house in a more open and salubrious locality.* Meanwhile it would have been too much to expect that the feud between two such men as now stood facing each other on the pictorial arena should cease. Before the year expired Titian again petitioned the council. He attributed the sudden burst of disfavour to which he succumbed to two causes,—the dread of his fellow painters lest they should find in him a successful competitor and the net of intrigues which had been spun by these same painters to force him away from his labours. Had he been allowed to proceed he urged that he would already have finished the work assigned to him, but this had been prevented by the withdrawal of the reversion of the *next* broker's patent; and he should have starved if he had had to wait for his turn on the list of candidates. His proposal now was—(November 28th, 1514), that as he could not expect to obtain the first vacant broker's patent he should be appointed to that which must needs be free on the death of Giovanni Bellini, and then he hoped the Salt office would pay his two assistants and furnish him with colours as before. By a majority of one in a council of thirteen a resolution was passed annulling the previous order of the *capita;* by nine to four the new offer was accepted; instructions were issued to the Salt office to give effect to the decree; and notice was sent to the "Visdomini al Fondaco" that a new

* The site of the workshop of Titian at San Samuele is not to be found; but see *postea*.

grant had been made to Titian.* At the same time the provisors were requested to take care that the "*reducto*" or workshop occupied by Titian "in the house of the late Duke of Milan at San Samuele should be put into repair, because it now let in the rain, and it might be that the models of the picture intended for the Hall of Great Council would be spoiled, by which the labours of the painter would be unnecessarily protracted."†

As it is likely that Bellini and Titian had their partisans even in the council chamber of the Doge, it is not unnecessary to note that the *capita* on the day of the issue of Titian's last patent were Francesco de' Garzoni, Francesco Foscari and Marino Giorgi; and Garzoni, it is important to remember, was the same patrician under whose charge the Fondaco de' Tedeschi had been rebuilt in 1506. Yet it was of little moment as it seemed that one faction of artists should gain a victory over the other, or that Titian should have had the right to work in the same Hall as Bellini. The quarrel between the two

* The records as engrossed for the Venetian archives are in Lorenzi, *u. s.*, pp. 160, 161. The patent addressed to Titian is dated Nov. 29, 1514, and was in 1864 in possession of Alessandro Vecellio, of Cadore, a descendant of Titian. It differs little from the records except in the conclusion, which is as follows: "Quare volumus et vobis Vicedominis Fontici nostri Theutonicorum tam præsentibus quam futuris auctoritate prefati consilii mandamus, quod cum casus evenerit concessionem hanc nostram ipsi Titiano observare et observari facere inviolabiliter debeatis in quantum ad vos spectat juxta mentem ipsius consilii, faciende hos nostros patentes in actibus officie vestri registrare. Dat. in N^ro Duc. Pal^o, die 29 Novembris, MDXIIII."

† Lorenzi, p. 161. With a wise economy the Council forbids the expenditure of more than five or six ducats on the repairs of Titian's workshop.

masters protracted rather than accelerated the labours of both, and the council was driven at last to take official cognizance of the matter by sending Francesco Valier fresh from the Salt office to report on the accounts of the painters and examine into their doings. The picture which Francesco Valier was induced to give of the position in which he found affairs was well calculated, if it were fair, to frighten the "sages." He said, in a minute presented and read to the council on the 29th of December, 1515, that as much money had been spent on the canvases of the Hall of Great Council as would have completed the whole palace, which, he added, was equivalent to saying that three times as many works might have been bought as had actually been produced. The painters besides had grants and offices, the accounts of which were never revised. In his opinion the council of Pregadi should be asked to audit these accounts and calculate what had been spent in canvases, colours, and salaries, in order to a revision of the whole matter. At a sitting of the "sages of the council and Terra firma" (Pregadi) which was held on the 30th of December, it was stated that according to Valier's report two canvases, of which the sketching alone was done, had already cost more than 700 ducats; and it was all the more necessary to provide against such waste, as there were masters at Venice willing to paint each canvas afresh for 250 ducats. Resolutions were accordingly carried ordering the dismissal of all the artists in the hall, authorizing the Provisor of the Salt office to select

the best artist and make a bargain with him for each piece, and appointing the three "Sages of the kingdom of Cyprus" to audit accounts.*

The prime mover in all this is clearly Titian, but it is doubtful whether he gave authority to any one to limit the price of a canvas to 250 ducats. He now tendered his services in a new form proposing to finish one picture for 400 ducats payable on delivery, subject to an advance of four ducats a month for one assistant, three ounces of blue, ten ducats' worth of colours and the reversion of Giovanni Bellini's patent at the Fondaco. He pointed out that the Signori would thus obtain the work which had once been entrusted to Perugino at a contract price of 800 ducats for half that sum.† The college of Pregadi met on the 18th of January, 1516, to deliberate upon this offer, and accepted it in all particulars except one. It gave Titian the reversion of the broker's patent, the colours and the salary of his assistant with 300 ducats as the final price of a picture, and although subsequent resolutions passed the council in December postponing the grant of Bellini's patent, it is clear from records of a later date that Titian entered before the close of 1516 into all the privileges and immunities previously enjoyed by his predecessor.‡

* Sitting of Dec. 30, 1515, in Lorenzi, p. 165.

† Titian's offer in Lorenzi (p. 165), and in Gaye (ii. 143), but the latter is erroneously dated in 1515.

‡ The grant to Titian of the conditions above stated is comprised in a resolution of January 18, "in Collegio" (Lorenzi, p. 166). On the 5th of the following December, six days after Giovanni Bellini's death, we find the following in the journals of the Council of Ten (Lorenzi, 166–7): "1516, Die V. Decembris, In Con-

The duties imposed on a painter holding a broker's patent in the Fondaco de' Tedeschi were intimately connected with the dignity of the Doge, and in part complementary of that dignity; for if on the one hand the painter was bound to fulfil certain conditions implied by his patent, the Doge was also bound to promote certain customs involving the ser-

silio X. *Capita*, che atente le rason et cause hora dechiarites ia per autorita di questo conseio preso che non obstante la concession fatta al Titian de Cadore deputato a depenzer nel Mazor Conseio de la Sansaria in Fontego di Todeschi da po la morte de Zuan Bellin. Quelli che hanno havuto expectative per avanti da lui de tal sansarie habiano le sansarie sue suo loco et tempore; et il dicto Tician similiter habia la sua sansaria al suo tempo, videlicet dopo le altre expectative existente perfin el zorno de la concession a lui fatta adì ultimo del mese de mazo 1513 cum el dicto conseio, cum i modi et condition fo deliberado ultimamente a bossoli et ballote nel Collegio nostro. De parte 10, De non 4, Non sincere 1.

That this resolution did not deprive him of his patent, because probably there were vacancies enough, is clear from the following, which though of a much later date, settles the point raised in this place: "MDXXXVII, Die xxiii Junii, Ser Leonardus Emo. Sap. Consilii, Ser Philipus Capello sap. Terræ firmæ. Fino dal 1513 a ultimo del Mese di Maggio fu concesso a Ticiano de Cadore Pictor una expectativa di una sansaria nel Fontego de i Todeschi la prima vacante et da poi del 1516 a 5 di Decembre fu dechiarito che senza spettar la vacantia di essa dovesse entrar in quella che haveva Zuan Bellin pictor cum conditione che fusse obligato depinger el teler de la bataglia terrestre nella sala del nostro maggior conseglio verso la Piaza sopra el canal grande, il qual Ticiano doppo la morte di Zuan Bellino entro in possesso de ditta sansaria gia sono circa anni vinti cum tirar le utilita di quella che possono esser de ducati 100 allanno oltra li ducati 18 in 20 della tansa annual che li sono sta lassati, et essendo ben conveniente che non havendo lavorato non debba havere detta utilita, pero: Landera parte che il ditto Tician de Cadore pictor sia per auctorita di questo conseglio obligato et astretto ad restituir alla Signoria nostra tuti li danari che lha havuto della predetta sansaria per il tempo chel non ha lavorato sopra el teller predetto nella sala, come e ben ragionevole. De parte 102, De non 38, non sincere 37 (Lorenzi, p. 219).

vices of the painter. "It is a custom of this city," says Sansovino, "that the Prince when in office should do three things: procure his own likeness of life size to be placed in a certain lunette beneath the ceiling of the Hall of Great Council, and for this Titian had a salary; obtain a picture of himself kneeling before the Madonna with an attendance of Saints, for the college or Pregadi, and furnish a shield with his arms to be placed on board the Bucentaur."* The broker's patent produced 100 ducats a year, and entitled the holder of it to an annual exemption from taxes valued at eighteen to twenty ducats.† The Doge's portrait was paid at the rate of twenty-five ducats.‡

The privilege to which Titian aspired and that which Bellini held before him was thus in the nature of a retaining fee making the recipient liable for the production of a portrait at rare and uncertain intervals. It was an annuity for life, and as such highly prized, but it was revocable at will, and this might lead us to suppose that the holder would do his best to keep the Council of Ten in good humour by anticipating its wishes or performing with speed and regularity such commissions as it might think fit to give. But in Titian's case the very reverse

* Sansovino, Cose Notabile, p. 47.

† See the resolution of the Council of June 23, 1537, *antea*, which corrects Vasari, Ridolfi, and Tizianello's Anonimo. The latter states Titian's income from this source at 200 scudi (p. v.), Vasari at 300 scudi (xiii., pp. 22, 23), Ridolfi at 400 scudi (Marav. i. 214).

‡ Vasari (xiii. 23) gives the rate of payment erroneously at eight scudi. The sum in the text is that registered in the accounts of the Salt Office. See *postea*.

of all this occurred. He painted the portraits and votive pictures of the Doges with tolerable regularity; but complaints that he neglected his work at the Hall of Great Council were heard during the whole of his life time. We saw that he offered in 1513 to compose a subject for that hall; that he began it, left it and was still promising to proceed with it in January, 1516. The theme which he proposed to treat and the place for which it was intended are known. He said in 1513 that his wish was to paint the "Battle" in the Hall of Great Council.* Sharp monitions reminded him in 1518, 1522 and 1537 that he was still under obligation to complete that work.† The same records clearly point out the place where this canvas was to hang, namely the place once conceded to Perugino, "fourth from the door on the right-hand side overlooking the Grand Canal."‡ It was the worst for its light in the hall, being on the south wall between two windows, and dark in proportion to the brilliancy of the light flowing in from the openings on both sides. It was in truth so unfavourable that Titian for years found no heart to finish it; and we may indeed assume that he postponed its completion till he had painted another canvas on the opposite wall of which Venetian records give no account, but which historians have described as an unfinished

* Record of May 31, 1513, *antea*, p. 153.

† Records of June 23, 1537, *antea*, p. 162, of July 3, 1518, and Aug. 11, 1522, *postea*.

‡ Record of Jan. 18, 1516, *antea*, p. 162.

composition by Giovanni Bellini to which Titian made extensive changes before he brought it to perfection. There is unhappily no evidence to guide us as to the date of this work, but if Vasari's opinion be accepted as correct, it was executed after the death of Giovanni Bellini and before the canvas of the "Battle."* It was exhibited in fact at a period far ahead of that to which we must presently revert; but as it perished in the fire of 1577, and this allusion to it suggests a description of the hall in which the best pictures of the Venetian school were displayed, we may devote a moment's time to it.

The Hall of Great Council, 175 feet long by 84 feet broad, lay in that part of the Ducal Palace which faced the Grand Canal, and occupied the same position as the present library, which indeed is neither more nor less than the Hall of Great Council as rebuilt on the old lines after 1577.† From the five windows looking out on the canal the view extended to San Giorgio and the Giudecca. Four windows on the parallel side opened on the court of the palace. Two large ones overlooked the Piazzetta; and a stranger standing with his back to these would have seen at the opposite end of the hall three things worthy of attention. He would have seen that in

* Vasari, xiii. 22, 28; but see also Ridolfi Maraviglie (i. 202–3), who states that this canvas had been left unfinished by Giorgione; and compare Sansovino, Delle Cose Notabile della Città di Venetia, *u. s.*, p. 35.

† It may be proper to state again that the hall faces east and west; the side occupied by the ducal throne facing east, that overlooking the Grand Canal facing south.

the angle to the right, a large door led into the hall, in the lunette of which St. Paul the Hermit was depicted sharing a loaf with his brother Hermit Anthony. Above this door, and covering the whole of the space now filled by Tintoretto's Paradise, he might study the colossal fresco of Guariento representing Christ crowning the Virgin Mary on a raised throne in front of a cathedral vaguely imitating the basilica of St. Mark; at the flanks of this throne the "hierarchies" of prophets on benches and attended by angels, and monumental niches containing the angel and the Virgin annuntiate. To the raised dais beneath this fresco,*—he would finally remark—there was an ascent of five steps leading up to the ducal throne flanked by the stalls of the members of the council, the sides of the dais being protected by wings of considerable breadth panelled and parted by columns. Along the remaining walls double rows of seats were placed, interrupted only where one window in the face overlooking the Grand Canal fell low to the floor, or three doors opened out in the parallel face to the Hall of Scrutiny, the Quarantia Civile and an inner room. Between the two windows opening on the Piazzetta stood the statue of St. Mark. On ceremonial days nine rows of benches running down the hall were occupied by the different orders privileged to attend the ballots. When Gentile

* It is a proof of the conservative feeling of the authorities that the Coronation by Guariento was restored by one Cevola in 1524. and no attempt was then made to substitute a modern work for it, though it was injured by cracks and fallen plaster; see the Records in Lorenzi, p. 180.

Bellini first began his labours he naturally chose the very best spot that he could find for his picture of the Pope granting the taper. He stretched his canvas for that subject in the corner nearest to the Piazzetta and St. Mark, whilst Giovanni Bellini placed the recognition of Pope Alexander at the Carità in the corner of the same face nearer the Grand Canal. The two frescoes were thus parted by the two windows between which the patron saint of Venice stood. Twelve spaces on the wall overlooking the court were those upon which Vivarini, the Bellini and their disciples were instructed to work, and of these, as was before observed, all but two were finished when Giovanni Bellini died. That which Titian is said to have completed was the seventh of the series numbered from the direction of the Piazzetta, and intended to illustrate that portion of the Alexandrine legend which tells how Barbarossa was accompanied by his son Otho to St. Mark, where peace having been signed, Alexander the Third, in token of supremacy, set his foot on the Emperor's neck. There is reason to believe that this canvas was taken in hand about 1522, because, according to contemporary accounts it contained portraits of Venetian senators of whom two at least were promoted after that date. There were indeed likenesses to which this would not apply such as that of Pietro Bembo, Jacopo Sannazaro, Andrea Navagero, Giorgio Cornaro, Antonio Trono, Paolo Capello, Gasparo Contarini, Marco Dandolo, Fra Giocondo, Agostino Beazzano, Marco Musurus, and Ariosto, men who

were most of them familiar to Titian, either directly as patrons or as members of the Aldine club. But the rest would be acquaintances of a later period, such as Marco Grimani in the dress of a "procurator" whose election took place in 1522, and whose death occurred in 1523, and Domenico Trevisani in similar dress whose election preceded his appointment to the command of a fleet against the Turks at Rhodes in 1522.* No later than August 1522 Titian was warned by the Council of Ten that he would lose the Sensaria if he did not resume the canvas of the "Battle;" but as it is notorious that this threat remained inoperative, and that he did not then complete the "Battle," it is not improbable that he did something to mollify the senate, and that Bellini's picture was then altered and finished.†

The readiness with which the Venetian Senate accepted Titian's services in 1513, may well have been caused by a wish to prevent so clever a painter from accepting an invitation to Rome. The harsh manner in which his dismissal was effected some months later, though excused by the penury of the treasury, may really have been due to the jealousy of

* Compare Sansovino, Ven. Desc. p. 334, and the Cronico Veneto, appended to his work at pp. 56–7.

† That he was at work in the Hall of Great Council in the autumn of 1522, we have from himself, in a letter addressed by Tebaldi to the Duke of Ferrara, but it is not stated upon what subject he was then working. See Campori, Tiziano e gli Estensi, p. 16. Sansovino, in Delle Cose Notabile della Città di Venetia, written in 1586, says (p. 35), "Titian painted two pictures in the Hall of Great Council, one of the Pope setting his foot on the neck of Barbarossa, the other of a fight which was done later."

Bellini and his friends. If this was the real motive, Titian was soon revenged. He was first promoted to the duties which Bellini had hitherto monopolized. Shortly after, he obtained a permanent footing at the court of Ferrara, to which in earlier days Giovanni Bellini had been exclusively invited.

Ferrara and Mantua, the two riverine States on the lower course of the Po, had long been governed by separate dynasties which grew in strength and repute under the power of Venice. Ferrara being altogether within the circle of Venetian influence, had been tamed, clipped, and kept down with persistent policy by the chiefs of the republic. The natural impulse of a vassal to shake off dependence had often driven the Dukes into war; and there was much in their relations to the suzerain State to gall and wound their pride; for Venice governed an entire quarter of Ferrara by officers of her own;—she forbade the manufacturing and gathering of salt, though salt was the natural produce of the Commacchian marshes; and she monopolized the navigation of the Adriatic and Po, though Ferrara commanded the mouths of the one, and had access by nature to the shores of the other. Yet so long as Italy was left to fight her own quarrels without foreign interference, the Dukes of Ferrara remained in close subjection, and in spite of occasional outbreaks which caused them to incur even territorial losses, they grew rich with little trouble to themselves, and displayed their wealth in luxurious expenditure. No history of Italian art would be complete which did not record the literary and

artistic activity that prevailed in the reign of Lionel, Borso, and Ercole of Este. The names of illustrious painters are instantly recalled to our mind when these Dukes are mentioned. Vittore Pisano, Piero della Francesca and Roger van der Weyden, are celebrated strangers who exercised their skill at Ferrara. Bono, Galasso, Cossa and Tura, are native masters whose talents popularized a style combining the hardness of the Paduans with the strength of Dürer. But Ferrara though it had a court, shared the fate of all dependent States. It was not favoured with the generous flow of life which makes great cities like Florence and Venice creative centres. It had a culture of its own, but a culture artificial and exotic; and this explains the temporary presence within its walls of Pisano and Piero della Francesca in the fifteenth and Bellini and Titian in the sixteenth centuries.

Ercole of Ferrara courted the alliance of France in the reign of Charles the Eighth, and narrowly escaped the consequences of French defeat. At his death in 1505, he left his eldest son Alfonso heir to a fortune in ready money—and master of a city in which noble palaces and enchanting suburban residences were protected from hostile attack by a cunning system of fortification. Alfonso's youth had been spent in a princely manner. He had seen much of the world, without neglecting his studies;—had often accompanied his father to Venice to share the politic homage of the Senate, and witness the gilded state of the Bucentaur sweeping up the Grand Canal to land

its freight of Dukes and Senators at the palace of Ferrara. On a journey to Florence and Rome in 1492, he was accompanied by Ercole di Giulio Grandi, a painter whose style reminds us that Ferrara owed some of her artistic expansion to the school of Bologna; in 1491 he had been to the French court at Lyons. His marriage to Lucretia Borgia in 1503, enlarged the dominions of his father though it gave him a wife for whom he did not care. He had not been long at the head of the State before his life was threatened by a conspiracy of his brothers, but he weathered that storm with ease, and plunged with surprising energy into the complicated politics of the time. The treaty of Cambrai was to have given him the left bank of the Po which his ancestors had lost, and he took possession of it in 1509, but before the year was out Venice had captured Commacchio and dictated a peace which restored the *status quo ante bellum*, leaving the Duke an easy prey to Julius the Second, who proved a worse enemy than the republic. Notwithstanding the protection of France, Alfonso was gradually stripped of as much land south of the Po as he had hoped to gain north of it; and during the wars which were waged from 1510 to 1512, he was well nigh ruined by loss of money, of men, and of territory. Fortune, however, seemed for a moment to tire of ill-treating him, for at Leo the Tenth's coronation he carried the banner of the Church. But Leo meditated the annexation of Ferrara, and but for Alfonso's escape would probably have effected it. Ferrara was saved by the treaty of Blois which

united Venice and France in 1513, and naturally included the Duke in the alliance. During the lull, Alfonso, in spite of his losses, was able to turn his attention to matters of art, and being of a temper much akin to that of Julius the Second, and ambitious of employing better men than the residents at Ferrara, he sent for painters of celebrity to assist him in the prosecution of his plans. Paul Jove has sketched with a partial hand the figure of Alfonso, whom he describes as having pawned his plate and jewels for money, and eaten his dinner off dishes of his own forming.* We may prefer to believe that the pottery which came upon his table was turned and baked by artists engaged by Ercole the First,† and that his taste in this was guided by the taste of his father, with whom in respect of art he had much in common. Ercole tried very hard to obtain the model of a horse upon which Lionardo da Vinci proposed to place the statue of Francesco Sforza. He wanted an effigy of himself upon that celebrated animal.‡ Alfonso made a determined but equally unsuccessful attempt to buy from Francesco Melzi, the drawings and manuscripts of Lionardo da Vinci.§ More fortunate in a similar effort at Bologna, he had the grim satisfaction of taking the head of Julius the

* See Paul Jove's Life of Alfonso I. of Este.

† See Notizie della manifattura estense della Maiolica, &c., del Marchese Gius. Campori, ol., Modena, 1864, p. 10.

‡ Compare Marchese Campori's Nuovi Documenti per la vita di L. da Vinci, in "Atti e Memorie delle R. R. Deputazioni di Storia patria per le provincie Modenese," vol. iii. Fasc. I., fol., Mod. 1866, p. 46.

§ Ibid. p. 50.

Second, if not in the flesh at least in bronze,* and when Michaelangelo was presented to him in 1529, he might, if so inclined, have shown the sculptor the only fragment that remained of his best and greatest work, the colossal statue which had been battered and broken on the square of San Petronio by the rabble of Bologna. During his visits to Venice he was charmed by the works of Bellini and Titian. At Rome he met Raphael from whom he obtained a promise of a picture, whilst Pellegrino da Udine who wandered to Ferrara, shared for a time the patronage extended to Giovanni and Battista Dossi. As early as 1506 Alfonso began to enlarge and embellish the castello which still rears its gloomy walls out of the slimy waters of a stagnant moat. On one side were the bright apartments called "alabaster chambers" from the whiteness of the material with which they were adorned,† on the other the dungeons in which Alfonso immured his brothers; near the chambers, the studio decorated either before or after 1514 by Dosso.‡ In this studio it was Alfonso's ambition to bring together the masterpieces of the greatest artists of his time; and we shall presently see that by threats and coaxing he succeeded in securing part at least of what he desired. He first invited Bellini to

* Vas. xii. 188.

† Antonio Lombardo, the son of Pietro Lombardo, of Venice, and decorator of the Chambers, appears in the Ferrarese accounts from 1505 to 1515 as a sculptor and former; see Campori (Marchese G.) in Cittadella, Documenti ed Illustrazioni, 8vo, Ferrara, 1868, p. 191; and the same author's Tiziano e gli Estensi, *u. s.*, 2; and Lorenzi, *u. s.*, 137.

‡ Vasari, xiii. 33.

Ferrara where he painted a Bacchanal, he then took Titian into his service, and he ended by worrying Raphael so much that his agents found some difficulty at last in forcing their way into the painter's presence. The Duke's enterprise, his enthusiasm, generosity and irascibility, are all illustrated in his treatment of these masters, and we hardly know which to admire most, the coolness with which Raphael and Titian whet the Duke's appetite with promises and mortify it with delays, or the cunning with which Alfonso establishes a pictorial see-saw, and turns his shafts alternately against Venice and Rome in the hope of attaining his object.

It was the habit of Titian to paint pictures for the places they were intended to fill, and in this he followed the traditions of all the schools. Sketching and laying in the subjects so far as he was able in his workshop at home, he took the canvas to the spot in which it was to hang, and finished it there.* Giovanni Bellini, who probably did the same thing, took the "Bacchanal," now preserved at Alnwick, to Ferrara, and spent some days in completing it. In the Duke's accounts we find an entry dated November 14th, 1514, crediting him with eighty-five ducats, and stating that the work was completed "*instante domino nostro*," that is in the very presence of Alfonso.†

* Abundant proof of this will be given in the course of this narrative.

† The record at full length in Marquis Campori's Tiziano e gli Estensi, p. 2, does not enable us positively to state that the picture for which eighty-five ducats was paid in 1514 was the Bacchanal at Alnwick; but we know of no other picture that Bellini did for Ferrara in that year.

Yet Vasari relates that it was unfinished when Bellini returned to Venice, and remained at Ferrara to be perfected by Titian, and we distinctly recognize his hand in the background of the "Bacchanal" at Alnwick.* There is great difficulty in believing that Bellini left a picture of such merit incomplete. It is more than probable that some foolish meddler injured the surface by tampering with it; and this is all the more likely, as a similar accident occurred to one of Titian's own pieces, which was so damaged by a pernicious varnish that he was obliged to repaint it.† But, whatever the cause may have been, Titian, in the end, laid hands on one of Bellini's canvases, and brought it to perfection, whilst Bellini was still living, and striving with all his might to trip up and impede his young and enterprising rival. But the "Bacchanal" of Alnwick is not interesting for the sole reason that it bridges, so to speak, the two arts of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries at Venice; it is interesting, also, as showing that Titian was now familiar with the landscape of Cadore as only an artist can be who goes out with his sketchbook in his hand, and carries his studies home. Between the trees which fringe the glade in which Bellini set his bacchanalian festival, the rock of Cadore rises in a steep and rugged mass; the castle of Pieve rears its towers on the crest, which falls more precipitously than in nature to the torrent of the Piave; and we feel that if the foliage would but let us, we should

* Vas. xiii. 23. † Tiziano e gli Estensi, p. 9.

see—as from Revis—the town of Pieve on the saddle to the left, the peaks of Antelao above the town, and beneath the castle crag the straggling houses of Sotto Castello.

Historians have written of the relations of Titian to Alfonso of Ferrara in the most flattering way; Vasari says that Alfonso "requited the painter's services largely, and paid him well." * Serlio, that Titian owed his position in life entirely to Alfonso,† whilst Ridolfi relates as an anecdote, that the Duke often took Titian with him from Venice to Ferrara on board his own Bucentaur.‡ But it is proper to remember that Titian's position in early years was not so prominent as it became at the court of the Gonzagas or of Charles the Fifth; and though we find Alfonso offering to take the painter to Rome,§ there is little trace in his letters of that familiarity which Ridolfi's anecdote suggests. Nor is it quite sure that Ariosto, who is described as Titian's friend,‖ was more than a condescending admirer of that skill which he valued equally in all artists of his time.¶

* Vasari, xiii. 24.

† Serlio, Architettura Marcolini's Edition, without date, lib. iv., goes so far as to say that Alfonso made Titian a knight.

‡ Ridolfi, Marav. i. 209.

§ See *postea*.

‖ Vasari, xiii. p. 25.

¶ The lines, as follows, are in the 33rd canto of the 2nd edition of the Orlando Furioso:—

"E quei che furo a nostri dì, o son ora
Leonardo, Andrea Mantegna, Gian Bellino,
Duo Dossi, e quel ch'a par sculpe e colora
Michel, più che mortal, Angel divino;
Bastiano, Raffael, Tizian ch'onora
Non men cador, che quei Venezia e Urbino."

In a letter to the Marquess of Mantua, bearing date the 14th of July, 1512, Ariosto excuses him-

In the second edition of Orlando Furioso, which was published in 1532, the poet devoted some lines of praise to the painters and sculptors of the sixteenth century, and described Titian as "the honour of Cadore." But it did not occur to him to make this point in the first issue of his poem, which appeared in 1516. Nor is there any proof in the poet's correspondence that Titian ever crossed the threshold even of that late dwelling upon which Ariosto wrote:—

> "Parva, sed apta mihi, sed nulli obnoxia, sed non
> Sordida, parta meo sed tamen ære domus."*

But if it should appear that Titian had not at this time the familiar intimacy with Alfonso and Ariosto which some princes and poets have had with great artists, there is no doubt that he was flattered by the Duke's eagerness to become possessed of his works, and was willing to do him service even in small things; and it is not improbable that Ariosto, whose portrait he painted, was the suggestive genius to whom we owe the subjects which were composed for Alfonso's studio.

self from sending his Orlando, because the MS. is in such a state of confusion, wanting filing and finishing, and covered with erasures and corrections, that no one can read it but himself. See Letteri di Alcuni Illustri Italiani, by Canon W. Braghirolli, 8vo, Milan, p. 15. At a late period Aretino is made to inveigh against Ariosto for naming Titian in one sentence with the Dossi. See Dolce Dialogo, p. 7.

* This dwelling, Strada Mirasole, No. 1208, near the church of the Cappuccini, Ariosto hardly owned before 1528, and there is no exact knowledge of the place where he resided previous to that date. See Indice Manuale delle cose . . . di Ferrara, 12mo, Ferr., 1844, p. 103.

As to the time when Titian first became acquainted with Ferrara, we saw that no certainty was to be acquired. The "Christ" of "The Tribute Money" which filled a panel in the studio, the portrait of Alfonso which subsequently passed into the hands of Charles the Fifth, and numerous pictures of which the very existence is now a mystery, were done at uncertain dates during a period of years of which we know the close but cannot trace the beginning. The first recorded journey of the painter to Ferrara was made in February, 1516, when he lodged with two assistants in the Castello of Ferrara. "Salad, salt-meat, oil, chestnuts, oranges, tallow candles, and cheese, and five measures of wine," are the rations which he received weekly from the 13th of February till the 22nd of March.* Who shall say whether Titian, at this moment, was finishing or repairing Bellini's bacchanal, or composing a bacchanal of his own? A letter addressed to the Duke a week later shows on what terms he stood with his patron:—

TITIAN TO THE DUKE OF FERRARA.

"YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

"I went without delay to the well of which Y. E. had written, and made a sketch of it, from which Y. E. will see how the matter stands; but I wish that sketch not to go alone, so send another with it of a well after the fashion of this country.

* "A M° Tuciano depintore alozato in castelo boche 3 per suo ordinario de la setimana presente principiando ozi (13 Feb.)..." Campori, Tiziano e gli Estensi, p. 4.

Should these drawings appear to have been done in a manner not agreeable to the greatness of your illustrious Signoria, or in accordance with my humble desire to serve Y. E., I hope to be excused; and that Y. E. will ascribe the cause to an earnest longing that the work should be done rapidly. I am entirely at command should the drawings be considered unsatisfactory, and am ready to furnish others; because, having given myself body and soul to Y. E., there is no pleasure I esteem so great as to be worthy of serving when and where Y. E. may think me fitted to do so. I have not forgotten the bath which Y. Ill. Signoria ordered of me, and I am working at it daily, so that, should its despatch be desirable and the time be made known to me, I shall send it; begging meanwhile to be humbly recommended to the good graces.

"I am Y. I. S.

"Servant,

"TITIANO.

"To my most Illustrious Signor the Signor Duke of Ferrara.*

"From VENICE, *Feb.* 19, 1517."

The tone of friendship is not to be found in this letter; but it merely reflects that form of subservience which distinguished Venice from other cities of the peninsula. Raphael and Michael Angelo wrote to princes in a more independent style; but they were not Venetians, and it is not in Florence nor at Rome but at Venice that the "majesty" of kings was first discovered.

* From the original in Marquis Campori's Tiziano e gli Estensi, p. 5.

But here we see Titian painting, not a bacchanal, but "a bath," of which we know no more now than of so many other works of which Titian's letters speak. The truth is Alfonso, in respect of the studio, was not thinking of Titian so much as of Raphael, or Pellegrino da Udine. Costabili, Bishop of Adria, his agent at Rome, was daily knocking at Raphael's door to remind him that he had promised the Duke a picture, and every letter reported that Raphael was mindful of his promise. Costabili had proposed the triumph of Bacchus as a subject which Alfonso would like; but Raphael had sent one of his disciples to Venice for the purchase of colours, and discovered that the same subject had been offered to Pellegrino da Udine. He would paint some other theme, he said; and meanwhile sent a present to the Duke, of a cartoon, the original of the "Oath of Leo the Third," recently completed in the Hall of Torre Borgia.* The whole of 1517 was spent in negotiations of this kind,—Titian corresponding regularly with Ferrara, receiving small sums of money, for which he purchased antiques; but, as far as records tell, painting no pictures for the Duke.†

Meanwhile the Bishop of Adria, whilst still pressing Raphael, whose promises and protestations fill the Roman correspondence with Ferrara in March and April, 1518, probably induced the Duke to be-

* The documents as to Raphael's dealings with Ferrara are in Marchese Campori's Notizie inedite di Rafaello da Urbino, fol., Modena, 1863, p. 6—9.

† Campori's Tiziano e gli Estensi, p. 6.

lieve that his hopes of a picture from Rome would scarcely be realized.* Alfonso therefore turned his attention to Titian, with whom his agent in Venice, Jacopo Tebaldo, opened a new negotiation; the question at first being as to a design which Titian was to furnish,† then as to a subject suggested from Ferrara, of which Ariosto was probably the author.‡ But, of this the following letters written by Titian and Tebaldo, give an account too good to be omitted.

TITIAN TO THE DUKE OF FERRARA.

"To the Most Illustrious and Excellent Lord,
my Lord Duke of Ferrara.

"MOST ILLUSTRIOUS LORD AND MY LORD,

"I received the other day, with due reverence your Lordship's letter, together with the canvas and framing. Having read and noted the contents, I considered them so pretty and ingenious as to require no improvement of any kind; and the more I thought over it the more I became convinced that the greatness of art amongst the ancients was due to the assistance they received from great princes content to leave to the painters the credit and renown derived from their own ingenuity in bespeaking pictures. Can I therefore doubt that, if God enables me to satisfy in any part the wishes of Your Lordship, I shall have all credit for my labour? Yet I shall, after all have done no more than give shape to that which received its spirit—the most

* Campori's Notizie ined. di Rafaello, p. 9.

† Feb. 25 and March 2 (?), 1518, in Campori's Tiziano e gli Estensi, p. 6.

‡ Campori, Tiziano e gli Estensi, p. 6.

essential part—from Your Excellency. But let this pass. . . . I am sure that Your Illustrious Signoria could not have thought of a subject more grateful or more after my own heart than this one; and I purpose to devote to it all my care and industry, in order that it may be brought to successful completion. What Your Lordship says, indeed, as to next St. —— as the date beyond which that completion should not be postponed, seems to me to involve too short an interval; the work, if it should be good and attractive, requires both more leisure and more study. Still, I mean to do my best to finish it at the appointed time; so that, should any thing remain to be done, that little will be so infinitesimal as to excuse me from asking for delay. I add no more than that I beg to be most humbly recommended.

"Your Most Illustrious Signoria's Servant,

[Signature gone.]

"From VENICE, *April* 1, 1518."

That this courtier-like letter refers to one of the bacchanals, seems to admit of the less doubt as it is supplemented by the following from Tebaldo, recording the place in the studio which the picture was to fill.

JACOPO TEBALDI TO THE DUKE OF FERRARA.

"MOST ILLUSTRIOUS AND EXCELLENT LORD,

"I had no sooner read your Excellency's orders of the 20th instant as regards the subject bespoken of M. Titian, than I gave him detailed instructions, handing him the paper containing the

sketch of a figure and complementary notes for his guidance. He told me he remembered that there were three pictures in the *fazata* (wall facing the light?) in Your Excellency's Studio; and that your Excellency had arranged that this one should be hung on the same *fazata*. He wishes to know whether the new canvas is to be in the middle of the others, or at one side, either towards the chapel or towards the Castello; and he promised to begin work this morning, proceeding without interruption to the close; and he begs to be recommended;—as likewise does—

"Your Excellency's most humble servant,

"JACOMO DELLI THEBALDI.*

"From VENICE, *April* 22, 1518."

Some weeks after the despatch of this letter, Alfonso came to Venice, "and probably gave personal instructions to Titian;" † yet months again elapsed before anything was done to satisfy his wishes. Neither Raphael nor Titian were to be had "for love or for money;" and now Alfonso's temper left him. He wrote in September to his agent Paulucci at Rome: "Go to Raphael and tell him that it is now three years since he began to lure us with promises; declare to him that this is not proper treatment for such as I am, and that if he does not do his duty he will soon find out the mistake he has made. Let him beware not to provoke our

* Campori, Tiziano e gli Estensi, p. 7. † Ibid. p. 8.

anger when we feel for him nothing but friendship; let him know what he may expect from performance, what he has to fear from neglect."*

To Titian in a much more rude and peremptory tone: "We thought," he writes to Tebaldi, on the 29th of September 1519, "that Titian, the painter, would some day finish our picture; but he seems to take no account of us whatever. We therefore instruct you to tell him instantly, that we are surprised that he should not have finished our picture; that he must finish it under all circumstances or incur our great displeasure; and he may be made to feel that he is doing an ill turn to one who can resent it. We are determined that he shall complete the work he promised: if he does not, we shall see to his doing it, and you are to advise us instantly of his resolution." †

Yet, when Alfonso wrote this, Titian had composed and exhibited the Assunta at the Frari. Flattering commissions had been sent to him from the provinces; and Lautrec, lieutenant of the King of France, had given him an order for a picture, with the consent of the Venetian senate.‡ As time rolled on, Alfonso found it advisable, though late, to change his tone with Titian—but this is anticipating; and we must return to Ferrara to examine what Titian had been doing there and at what pictures he had been working.

* Campori, Notizie Inedite di R. da Urbino, p. 27.

† Campori, Tiziano e gli Estensi, p. 8.

‡ Lautrec's picture is not to be traced. The payment for it was made in 1522. (See Lorenzi, p. 175.) It may be one of those now in the Louvre.

CHAPTER VI.

Lucretia Borgia and Laura Dianti.—Did Titian Paint these Portraits? Likeness of Alfonso d' Este.—Ferrarese Pictures.—Worship of Venus at Madrid.—So-called Portraits of Ariosto.—Poetry of Titian's Art.—The Three Ages.—Riposo.—Noli me Tangere.—The Assunta at Venice.—Titian's Technical Treatment of Pigments.—His Style.—Annunciation at Treviso.—Quarrel of Titian with the Signoria.—Visit to Ferrara.—Bacchanal of Madrid.—Better Relations with Alfonso.—Pottery.—Madonna of Ancona.—Alfonso and Titian's St. Sebastian.

It is natural to think that the very first request which the Duke of Ferrara would make to a master like Titian would be to paint a likeness of his wife; yet, to the question whether Titian ever produced a portrait of Lucretia Borgia, history will be found to have given a very dubious answer. When Lucretia was sent, in 1503, by her father to Ferrara, she was already well known throughout Italy as the beautiful widow of several husbands; and there were tales whispered of her which might have made a hardened ruffler of those days shudder. But during her stay at Ferrara, where she lived for years in comparative quiet, Lucretia was held to have led a life of fair repute; and poets and statesmen were unanimous in praising her virtue and the gifts of her mind. That a princess so celebrated should not have sat to Titian is almost inconceivable; yet no portrait of her, either by Titian or by Dosso, has been

preserved; and all that we know is, that portraits purporting to be hers, were engraved by the cleverest artists of a later age. But, with respect even to this, the question arises whether the pictures —lost to us in their original shape though preserved by engraving — were really counterfeits of Lucretia Borgia. So far as Titian is concerned, Ridolfi affirms that the Duke of Ferrara requested him to delineate the features of his Duchess; whom he represented in a picture, afterwards engraved by Sadeler, as a woman of majestic port, with veils and gems, a black velvet bodice, and looped sleeves, resting her hand on the shoulder of an Ethiopian page.* A glance at the print, which is a very fine specimen of Sadeler's art, reveals that the lady who sat to Titian can hardly have been under the rank of a princess; since none but a princess, in those days, could indulge in the luxury of an Ethiopian page; and the gemmed passion-flower and silken ribband adorning her turbaned head, or the looped silk-gown and scarf of striped gauze which set off her person, are not less rich and elegant than the dress which gives distinction to Isabel of Este or the Duchess of Urbino. Still, we may admit that arguments such as these would not in themselves be convincing, unless they happened to be stronger than those brought forward in rebutment; and it is to be borne in mind, that historians who note the completion of a portrait of the Duchess of Ferrara by Titian do not once mention the name of Lucretia Borgia; and

* Ridolfi, Marav. i. 209.

they may, as far as we can tell, have been alluding to Laura Dianti, supposed by many to be Alfonso d' Este's second wife. Without going so far as this, Marquis Campori, a judge of absolute competence in respect of Ferrarese art and history, supposes that Sadeler's print represents a Sultaness such as Titian is known to have painted,* but certainly not Lucretia, whose features on extant medals are of a different cast. If we should venture to disagree with so good an authority it might be to urge how improbable it is that Sadeler's plate should represent a Sultaness; since the person represented bears no trace of oriental blood, and the canvas on which she was portrayed was preserved in Italy and passed at the close of the seventeenth century into the collection of Queen Christine.†

As regards the features, there is no doubt some force in the objection that they are not like those engraven on the medals. But the profile of Lucretia in the two medallions struck in 1503 and 1505 is that of quite a young woman,‡ whereas the full face

* Vasari, xiii. 43; Campori, Tiziano e gli Estensi, p. 33.

† That the original of Sadeler's print is the same picture as that catalogued in Queen Christine's collection will be clear to any one who can compare both. The entry in the catalogue is as follows: "A portrait of a lady clad in blue, with a yellow veil over the shoulder, showing part of the white chemise at the bosom and wrist, holding up her skirt with the right hand, resting her left on the shoulder of a little Moor, who looks up at her. Canvas, by Titian, 4⅔ palms high, and 3¾ broad." Campori, Racolta de' Cataloghi, p. 342.

‡ The two medals have the same profile of Lucretia, one with Alfonso's head on the obverse, and a legend showing that Lucretia was not then the reigning duchess; another with a figure of Cupid blindfolded and bound to an apple tree, on the boughs of which there hangs a stringless bow, a broken quiver and arrows. A very fine example of the latter

of Sadeler's print is that of a matron; and the simple lines of the youthful face in the former might, in the course of years, have been altered to the full shape of the latter with its rounded nose, broad cheek and firm-set mouth. Under any circumstances it would be difficult to compare the medal profile of a lady of twenty with an engraved full face of the same lady at thirty-five. But in Italy, where years tell so markedly on female form, such a comparison would be more difficult than any where else; and thus we may believe it possible that Ridolfi was rightly informed when he identified Sadeler's engraving as representing the Duchess of Ferrara.* It may be said, however, that, if Titian had had Lucretia for a sitter, there would be some trace of the fact in local

is in the Berlin Museum. It was engraved by Dr. Friedländer, and the print will be found in F. Gregorovius' Lucrezia Borgia, 8vo, Stuttgardt, 1874.

* There is a portrait engraved (as appears from a monogram) after an original by Dosso, which we cannot trace. This represents a lady with a feather fan hanging from her waist. On a pedestal to the right a marble Cupid presents her with an apple. She stretches out her right hand to pluck a lemon from a bush on the left. On the pedestal we read: LVCRETIA BORGIA ÆTATIS SVÆ AN XL A.C.N.MDXX; above it D and a cross-bone, the monogram of Dosso. It is to be remembered that Lucretia never attained to the age of forty, and died in 1519, which makes the whole of the above unauthentic.

It has been suggested that the dame in the "Horoscope," now No. 2389 in the Dresden Museum, is Lucretia Borgia. But this suggestion, which we owe to Messrs. A. Baschet and Feuillet de Conches (Les femmes blondes par deux Vénitiens, 8vo, 1865, p. 5), is only based on the fact that the eagle, cognizance of the Estes', is in a corner of the picture.

Another picture connected with Lucretia's name is No. 224 in the Dresden Museum. Here a man, his wife, and a child, kneel before the Virgin Mary, and the female is called Lucretia Borgia. But this picture, though assigned to Titian, is by one of his pupils, perhaps Orazio or Marco Vecelli. It was certainly executed after the death of Alfonso of Este.

annals; and it is curious that no such traces exist. Yet, with respect to this, we must always bear in mind that the name of Borgia came to be of evil omen in Italy after the death of Alexander the Sixth; that the Ferrarese would have an interest in forgetting Lucretia and keeping silence as to the means by which they came to claim Modena and Reggio. The brightness which surrounded the wife of Alfonso of Este in her life time was effectually quenched at her death; and in history, as well as in poetic or dramatic legend, she only survived as a monster. This being so, and the Borgias being systematically cried down, there would be a natural tendency to turn the portraits of the duchess to the wall; and when they were turned round again to the light their name would naturally be forgotten. And this alone, we may think, might account for the fact that Lucretia's semblance disappeared whilst that of her husband was preserved.

The likeness of Alfonso is still extant, and we shall shortly see how intimately its removal to Madrid was connected with Titian's relations to Ferrara and the Court of the Emperor Charles the Fifth.

Judging of Alfonso by this picture, he was a sanguine, hot-blooded man, of hasty but energetic temper; his age at the time he was portrayed being under forty. Not a grey hair is to be seen in the shock of black curly locks, or the twisted points of the moustache, or the chestnut mass of the well trimmed beard. A broad forehead, with the hair in a peak down the centre of it; a clear open eye under an

arched brow; a nose of short proportions, but neatly cut; a noble attitude and handsome dress make up an attractive figure. The left hand resting naturally on the hilt of the sword; the right, partly concealed in lace, fondles the silken back of a dog. A dark coat edged with gold patterns, a rosary about the neck, a green scarf, inscribed at the waist "Ticianu," complete the picture, which is relieved upon a dark ashen ground. Though changed in the course of centuries by abrasion, restoring, and stippling, this portrait is still evidence of Titian's extraordinary power and dexterity, displaying in the soberest of scales a freshness and richness of surface which not only strike us as unsurpassed in its time, but also impress us with the belief that Titian alone was capable of producing them. There is evidence in the style and technical handling that the period to which this panel may be assigned is that which immediately precedes the "Bacchanal" of Madrid—evidence which receives confirmation from the apparent age of the person delineated.* "Three hundred scudi," says Dolce, "were given by Alfonso for this piece, which Michaelangelo, in 1529, greatly admired;" † the same sum may have been paid for the portrait of the Duchess, to which no date can be assigned. After a short space of time, Titian was entrusted with a very different commission. Lucretia Borgia died in 1519: Alfonso declared his

* This picture, No. 452 in the Madrid Museum, is on panel, M. 1·25 h., by 0·99. As to a copy made before the original was taken to Spain, see *postea*.

† Dolce, Dialogo, *u. s.*, p. 17. Vasari, xii. 210.

affection for Laura Dianti, and modern criticism supposes that Titian painted the pair in a single picture.

Besides portraits, Titian executed for Alfonso of Ferrara both religious and mythological subjects; and, of these, the earliest in point of time is the "Venus Worship" which adorned the walls of the Duke's studio, and now hangs in the Museum of Madrid. The goddess stands—a marble statue on a marble pedestal—a shell in her right hand, and holding up the cestus with her left; at her feet two nymphs, one of whom is a handsome girl with loose tresses in a tunic of pure ultramarine, pointing to a tablet inscribed "Munus;" whilst the second, in bare arms, white sleeves, and a red tunic, is seated on a bank presenting a mirror. A stream at the base of the pedestal waters the edge of an undulating ground upon which winged cupids swarm, plucking the apples sacred to Venus from the branches of grand orchard trees, climbing boughs like boys, dropping down from them like thrushes, loading baskets, throwing and catching, tumbling, fighting, and dancing, with such zest and glee as only little, lusty, healthy boys, that have spirits, health—and wings—can do. In the very middle of the foreground, near a basket of fruit, close to the variegated dresses which the boys have thrown off, a rosy child raises his arms to catch the apple that has not yet left the hands of his companion; and does not see that, behind the playmate, a little marplot is shooting an arrow at him. In rear of this group, Eros is also kissing an apple, two little Loves are embracing each other; and,

behind these again, a troop of eager children chase a tired hare, whilst their bows and arrows hang unheeded on the branches. This pretty scene charms us by simplicity of incident and innocence of thought. The forms are lovely; they move beneath our glance, vanish, and return again with infantine activity. The eye is allowed to plunge into a landscape of beautiful undulation and generous vegetation. A calm air seems to refresh the objects it surrounds. A mild harmonious light is balanced with such consummate art in shades of the finest and most delicate harmonies, that the colours are brought into a generous chord of richness. Behind a group of merry beings dancing round and round in the middle distance, a bush of a strong green tint is seen, relieved upon a meadow lit up by the sun; in rear of which the top of a steeple cuts sharp on hills of Alpine formation. A little to the left are the old orchard trees, with strong and healthy trunks and boughs, abundant leafage, and splendid fruit; between the trunks a house, more distant trees, and the clear blue of the sky dappled with a whitish cloud.

"You see," says Philostratus, "the Cupids are gathering apples, and you might be surprised at their numbers, but that they are the offspring of the nymphs and govern all that is mortal, and their multitude is proportioned to the varied desires of mankind. . . . The garden is pleasantly laid out with walks; a tender sward invites to rest; but the golden apples show their red and yellow faces in the branches, and stir the appetites of the little ones. They hang

their golden arrows and quivers on the boughs, and rove in swarms about the place. Their variegated clothes are laid upon the ground; they want no garlands, for their heads are decked with abundant hair. Blue, gold, or coloured are their wings, the hum of which is like music. The baskets in which they throw the apples are of cornelian, emerald, or pearl, the handiwork, no doubt, of Hephæstos. Ladders they need not, for they fly into the very heart of the fruit; they dance and run, or rest, or sleep, or sate themselves with apples. Here are four of the loveliest of them. One throws an apple to the other; a third shoots his arrow; but there is no wickedness in him, for the breast is bared to the shaft. The riddle which the painter gives us here to solve doubtless expresses love and longing. The little ones who play with the apples suggest the first of these sensations—the child who kisses an apple throws it to his companion, who catches it with both hands, and will doubtless kiss it and throw it back. But the archers send their arrows deep into their hearts, and so I say, the first are playing with love that is dawning, the second symbolizes its eternal duration. But what are these whose doings are watched by spectators? One, you observe, has been caught from behind unawares, and his adversary winds his legs about him as if to stop his breath; he resists and wrings the other's fingers. This the boy can scarcely bear, so bites his opponent's ear. The ring calls out foul play, and pelts the culprit with apples. But stop, here is a hare who shall not escape

us. Let us help the Cupids to seize him. He was eating apples under the trees, and they have hunted and frightened him, some by clapping of hands, some by screeching, others by the flutter of their clothes—all are after him and loud in pursuit; but he sprang aside, and though he was fast by the leg for an instant, he wriggled away again; and now the little hunters laugh and tumble over each other, neglecting even their bows and arrows the while, because they wish to present the hare, the sweetest of all sacrifices, alive to Aphrodite. But here is Venus herself. What say you, has she anything to do with apples? Mark the hollow bank from which the rill is flowing to water the trees with its transparent waters. There stands Aphrodite, whom the Nymphs have formed because she made them mothers of the Cupids; and the silver mirror and golden clasps and sandals are no vain present—but, as the inscription tells, a gift of the Nymphs to Venus; and the Cupids sacrifice their apples to her, and pray she may keep the garden lovely as ever." *

The commentators of Philostratus have quarrelled over the question whether the subject which he describes was taken from a picture or from fancy, and one of them has made a charming sketch of the transformation by means of which the Angel of the Venetian Renaissance becomes the Eros of Titian, and then wanders back, without change of shape, into the realms of Titian's paradise.† There is no denying

* Φιλόστρατου Εἰκόνων, Lib. I. vi. Ἔρωτες.

† Herman Grimm's "Engel und Liebesgötter," in the 35th

it; the flying Cupids which give such lightness to Titian's canvas also appeal to our memory as the first display of those delicious messengers of heaven who people the sky of the Assunta, or flutter above the throne in the Madonna di Casa Pesaro. With the force and harmony which are peculiar to Titian, we have here his earlier and smoother finish, a careful modelling and clean outline. A dominant warm tone pervades alike the cooler greys and greens and the brighter shades of bright-coloured stuffs. We can well imagine the story to be true, that when Domenichino heard of the transfer of this picture to Spain the tears started to his eyes. Poussin too, and Van Dyck would miss it as well as Rubens, who copied it, and Albano might regret the originals of so many of his adaptations.*

There is no allusion to this picture in any of the correspondence preserved at Modena or Ferrara, nor is it mentioned in any of the contemporary accounts that are handed down to us. But it was probably the earliest of the three canvases furnished by Titian for the Duke's studio, because it is handled with more

vol. of the Preussischen Jahrbücher. But Vasari had already noted Giorgione's "Angelo a guisa di Cupido." Life of Giorgione, vii. 84.

* This picture, now No. 451 in the Museum of Madrid, is on canvas, M. 1·72 h., by 1·75. It bears the Escurial mark, "N. 102, Di Ticianus," on the piece of white cloth in the centre of the foreground. The surface on the whole is well preserved, though we should note some re-touching in the sky, some stippling in the form of the girl holding the mirror. We shall see presently how it came from Ferrara to Spain. An etching of it was made in Rome in 1636, which gives the composition reversed. It is by Geo. Andrea Podesta, of Genoa.

of the youthful care and less of the riper freedom which are conspicuous in the "Bacchanal" of Madrid, or the "Bacchus" of the National Gallery, both of which were finished after 1519. But supposing it to have been executed—as we may think it was—before 1518, it was preceded by many other pieces of which it is necessary to take account, and by none more important than the portrait of Lodovico Ariosto. Of this poet's acquaintance with Titian there is no more doubt than there is of Ariosto having sat to the master for his likeness. It is of their intimacy that we require proof, for though each of them is said to have been godfather to the other's children, there is no evidence to support the statement.* When the guildsmen of Venice proposed to do honour to the remains of Titian in 1577 they planned a ceremony as grand and imposing as that performed by the Florentines at the burial of Michael Angelo, and amongst the pictures with which they proposed to decorate the catafalk, one was to represent Alfonso of Ferrara with attendant pages listening to the poet reading, whilst Titian sat painting at his easel.† When Titian first made the Duke of Ferrara's acquaintance, Ariosto was in the service of Cardinal Hypolitus, which he did not resign till 1517. Yet it might be that even as the servant of Hypolitus the poet would occasionally be the Duke's companion, and it is quite credible that Alfonso should have patronised the poet and the painter in the manner suggested. But an

* Ticozzi, Vite dei pittore Vecelli, p. 42.

† Ridolfi, Marav. i. 279.

incident of this kind handed down by tradition soon expanded into a portentous myth, and it became the fashion to believe that the "painter-poet" and the "poet-painter" entered into an intellectual partnership in which "Homer" was made to consult "Apelles" as to the form of his poem, and "Apelles" in return transferred the features of "Homer" to canvas.* Those who like may credit the story. As to the portraits which Titian executed of Ariosto they were two in number at least. One was inherited by Ariosto's son, Virginio, who took it to Padua in 1554.† The other was merely a drawing for the woodcut annexed to an edition of the Orlando published in 1532. What became of the first it is impossible to say; but we may note that as far back as the middle of the seventeenth century there were two painted likenesses of Ariosto assigned to Titian: one in the Renier collection at Venice, which Ridolfi described in 1646, another which belonged to Don Alphonso Lopez, Privy Councillor to the King of Spain, whose collection at Amsterdam was sold and dispersed in London in the reign of Charles the First,‡ and it is probable that the second of these is that preserved at Lord Darnley's seat of Cobham Hall. In this grand picture we acknowledge the finest creation of Titian

* Ridolfi, Marav. i. 209–10. Ticozzi, Vite, p. 42.

† Baruffaldi's Ariosto, p. 251.

‡ Don Alphonso had a fine collection, including Titian's Flora, now at the Uffizi, and Raphael's portrait of Balthazar Castiglione. See Sandrart's Prints; Mündler's Analyse Critique, 8vo, Paris, 1850, pp. 182–3; and the late M. Villot's notice of Raphael's Castiglione in the Louvre Catalogue of 1866. See also *postea*.

in that period of his career, which showed itself pregnant with the influence of Palma and Giorgione. Nothing can exceed the richness of its tones, the brightness of its tints, or the nice blending of its modelling, the subtlety of its gradations or the radiance of its light. The person represented, a man of dignified air, displays at once an elevated serenity and a clever sprightliness, and one sees that the painter, whilst imitating nature, was aiming at an ideal to be attained, if not by those arts of selection which was familiar to the Greeks, at least by a force and delicacy of colour equally excellent. The poet—if it be Ariosto—is seen passing at a slow walk, the upper part of his form being visible above a parapet, his body in profile, whilst the head and eyes are turned to front the spectator. It is a figure of noble port, with a face of fine features handsomely set off by a dark spare beard and long chestnut hair, divided in the middle. A plaited shirt leaves the throat and neck exposed, losing itself in the breadth of a dark doublet, the sleeves of which are of quilted blue satin, standing out with gorgeous effect, as the right arm which it covers is raised to rest the hand against the chest.* It is difficult to convey in words

* The portrait at Cobham Hall, seat of Earl Darnley, a half-length on grey-green ground, is painted on canvas, and is 2 ft. 1¼ in. broad, by 2 ft. 9 in. high, inscribed on the brown toned parapet beneath the figure, "TITIANVS *F.*" It has no pedigree, yet may, as above stated, be the same which we find noticed as belonging, in Charles I.'s time, to the Lopez Collection (Claude Vignon to F. Langlois, in Bottari, Raccolta di Lettere, Milan, ed. 1822, vol. iv. p. 446); and this in its turn may have been Titian's portrait of Ariosto, which according to Baruffaldi (Life of Ariosto),

the conspicuous purity of the bloom in this piece which as much excels earlier efforts of portraiture as the bacchanals surpass the similar efforts of a previous age. Looking back at the masterpieces admired as perfect of this kind at the opening of the century, looking back, we may say, at Antonello's "Condottiere" in the Louvre, or Bellini's "Loredano" at the National Gallery, we recollect that they left upon us the impress of an absolute perfection, the feeling that art has gone so far it can scarce go further. But Titian appears, and art takes a step in advance, and we feel that there may be some further perfection of which as yet we do not dream.

We said, this portrait "passes" for the likeness of Ariosto. It sometimes happens that different persons take different views of the same features; and Titian himself may have obtained various impressions of Ariosto's features at divers periods, and, *à fortiori*, other painters to whom the poet sat might delineate the face in a form varying from that of Titian. These reflections are suggested by the fact that a portrait assigned to Titian, and described as Ariosto, is preserved in the National Gallery, which

was sent from Ferrara to Virginio Ariosto at Padua in 1554, and was since lost. The Cobham Hall portrait cannot be that which Ridolfi describes in the Renier collection (Maraviglie, i. 210), the dress being different. But, fine as it is, the Cobham Hall picture is not in perfect preservation. The beard is extensively re-touched, and some injury has been done by time and wear. There is an engraving of the Lopez Ariosto which exactly coincides with the picture at Cobham Hall. It is inscribed, "Joachimus Sandrart del. et excud. Amsterd. E Titiani prototypo in ædibus Alph. Lopez."

differs greatly from that of Cobham Hall, whilst a profile engraved in the latest edition of the Orlando, to which Ariosto himself made corrections, shows little resemblance with either. Of the portrait at the National Gallery it may be said that a more engaging or attractive one it would be difficult at a first glance to find. The attitude is one of thought, one hand plays with a rosary, the other (the right) holds a pair of gloves. An open but rather sensual face, hair falling in rich masses on the neck, a shirt plaited into a doublet, and sleeves of red wadded silk damask, varied by a striped fore-sleeve displayed outside of a pelisse of brown fur. All this produces a grand effect. The laurel bush in the background fitly suggests the presence of the "Poet Laureate." Yet if this be the bard his face is more feminine, his form less grandiose than that of his namesake at Cobham Hall. But here we may detect on closer examination a certain class of deficiencies to which Titian has not as yet accustomed us. The finish or blending of the flesh is deceptive. It will not bear close inspection, and the drawing proves to be loose and faulty. The colour, though rich and bright, is too smooth and too uniform, where—as in the trees—it is not too sharp and cold, the tone is too rosy and tame, the modelling too feeble for the great and incomparable master.* Two men—artists both, and

* The portrait of Ariosto, No. 636 in the National Gallery, was once a panel, but is now on canvas, 2 ft. 8½ in. high, by 2 ft. wide. It answers the description given by Ridolfi of the "Ariosto" in the Renier collection exactly; belonged to the Tomline and Baucousin collections, and was not in the Renier collection at its

artists of skill, might very fairly be suggested as the painters of this picture, Pellegrino da San Daniele or Dosso Dossi. But any one declaring for the latter would be affirming, what as yet is far from being proved in a definite sense, that Dossi at some period of his practice was thoroughly Venetian in feeling and in technical treatment, whereas in the majority of his works he oscillates between the Lombard and the Mantuan in a manner too decided to remain unobserved.

It is curious in the meanwhile, and deserves to be taken into consideration, that when Ariosto's likeness is in question the arch-type acknowledged in Italy is that of Cobham Hall, of which we have testimony in the portraits of the Vicenza gallery of the Tosi collection at Brescia, and of the Manfrini-Barker and Munro collections in England, all of which, strangely enough, are assigned to Giorgione,* and

sale in 1666. It has suffered from re-painting, especially in the neck and neighbouring parts. (Compare Ridolfi, Marav. i. 210; and Campori, Raccolta di Cataloghi, p. 442.)

* The "Manfrini-Ariosto" passed into the Barker collection in 1857, and was afterwards sold. It was held to be original by Waagen (Treasures of Art in Great Britain, 8vo, Lond. 1854, iii. 19), and by Burckhardt (Cicerone, 12mo, Leipzig, 1855, p. 967 *a*,) but is justly restored to its true place, that of a bad and late copy, by Mündler (Beiträge zu Burckhardt's Cicerone, 8vo, Leipzig, 1870, p. 61). Another copy of the "Cobham Hall Ariosto," but with varieties, is No. 25 in the Gallery of Vicenza; but here the hand rests on a book lying on a parapet. The picture is by a late Venetian, and is injured by restoring. The head, copied from the "Cobham Hall Ariosto," is in the Tosi collection at Brescia, and quite modern. A fourth "Ariosto" passed with the collection of Mr. Munro into the hands of Mrs. Butler Johnstone in London.

There was a portrait of Ariosto in the collection of Cardinal Alessandro d'Este at Ferrara in 1624. (Campori, Racc. di Catal. p. 69.)

yet it cannot be denied that there is more affinity between the "Ariosto" of the National Gallery and that engraved in the Furioso than there is between this engraving and the portrait of Cobham Hall; and it only remains to notice that the plate in the Furioso represents Ariosto in profile, and is a wood-cut of the best type—equally masterly in the display of the features and clever in the composition and design of its ornamental framework. But whereas at Cobham Hall we have an open face, and at the National Gallery a sensual one, here the features are those of a shrewd and penetrating statesman whose brow is strongly marked, and whose eyelid projects like the eaves of an Italian house. The eye is near to the nose, and this nose shoots out to some length, and looks extraordinarily wise as it commands a face cast into very malleable fleshy planes, adorned with a ringlet beard, and hair that has left a bush of single locks on the forehead before retiring to produce an eloquent baldness on the scalp.* When Titian made this drawing Ariosto was verging upon

* The face is turned to the right in this print, which is signed in the ornament with the name of F., or Francesco de Nanto, a Savoyard, whose prints are very rare. (See Panizzi in G. Melzi's Bibliografia dei romanzi, &c., 8vo, Milan, 1837, pp. 117, 118.) Titian's drawing of this profile is proved in a letter from Verdizotti to Orazio Ariosti, dated Feb. 27, 1588, in which the former encloses the print to the latter, saying it was drawn by Titian and printed from his drawing. The letter is in the library of Ferrara, and part printed in the above work, and in Baruffaldi's Ariosto, p. 251. We may note also that the profile in this print exactly corresponds to the profile in all the medals struck in Ariosto's honour, and to the profile engraved by Æneas Vico. Mr. Panizzi reprinted De Nanto's profile of Ariosto as a frontispiece to his edition of the Orlando in 1834.

sixty, and a very different person in appearance from the young and charming poet who pleased Isabella d'Este when he first recited the chants of the Furioso.* But even in this form and at this age his portrait was popular, and we see it reproduced on a small scale as alleged by Titian, in the gallery of the Belvedere at Vienna.†

If Titian was not a poet in the sense attributed to him by those who disfigure his relation to Ariosto by ill-judged flattery; if we cannot imagine him the adviser of Ariosto in matters upon which Ariosto would probably have disdained to consult him, we shall not deny that he was gifted with the poetic fibre. There is not a line in Titian's landscapes that does not prove him an inborn poet in the subtlest sense that the word conveys—not a detail in an allegory like "Sated Love" that does not prove the poetry of his thought. Perhaps he was only the "muto poeta" of whom Tasso sings, but though mute still capable of expressing the sublime with his pencil. The humanists might find it necessary to suggest such subjects as the "Bacchanal" or the "Bacchus and Ariadne." An allegory like

* This occurred as early as 1507. See the letter of Feb. 3 of that year, addressed to Cardinal Hypolitus, in Tiraboschi's Storia della letteratura, 8vo, Milan, 1824, vii. p. 1815.

† The portrait at the Belvedere is a small bust profile, turned to the left, of a man in a brown pelisse lined with fur. The face, without being very like, is clearly taken from the print of 1532, but the painter is not Titian. Judging of it by the treatment, the picture was painted by Teniers for the Archduke Leopold William, with whose collection it was transferred to Vienna. The size of the panel is only 10 inches high by 8 inches wide.

that of the "Three Ages" which Titian now painted would naturally spring from his own inner consciousness; and even those who should venture to deny that his mind could give birth to such an allegory would be obliged to admit that he depicted it with the utmost delicacy of poetic feeling, nor is there any excuse for thinking that Titian here had promptings from the Laureate of Ferrara, since the picture was painted at Venice for a private gentleman at Faenza in whose house it remained during a part of the sixteenth century; and it was not till the seventeenth that its fame increased so as to make it welcome first in the gallery of a queen, and last in the collection of an English peer. Lord Ellesmere's "Three Ages" is an idyll equally simple in form and in colour. A beautiful girl sits near her lover "and the holy feeling of youthful innocence and affection is charmingly expressed in both."* At the foot of a tree the lover—a shepherd in scantiest attire—rests in front of his maid on the sward, leaning one arm on her shoulder, as she, facing him and crowned with flowers, looks into his eyes and directs his awkward hand to the stops of the reed pipes. We strike again the key-note of "Artless love," yet with what an incomparable sweetness of tone. But the tale is merely half told. The middle ground to the right shows us Cupid at the side of a tree stump stepping on to the forms of two sleeping children, whilst in the distance of a quiet landscape,

* Waagen, Treasures, ii. 31.

an old man philosophically contemplates two skulls on the ground. The qualities of this picture are: breadth of tint, spareness of pigment, and little or no touch, much transparence and a balanced distribution of warm shadow and modelled light excluding sharp contrasts of all kinds. There are vibrations in it of a very tender harmony, much akin to that of a touching melody in music. In the eyes of most critics of a past age this was Giorgionesque art, and in so far as we acknowledge Giorgione to be the master who first perfected the portrait idyll, this cannot be denied; but the Giorgionesque feeling is still more conspicuous when we consider that the youth's head, with its rich accompaniment of locks, is cast in a mould of which Giorgione was fond, though we may doubt whether Giorgione would have been so polished and yet so bright or so fully imbued with the rules of high art as Titian here shows himself to be. A close observation of Nature may be detected which suggests a study as deep and profound as that attributed to Donatello. To the children as to the lovers the forms appropriate to their age are given; and the whole subject is treated with such harmony of means as to create in its way the impression of absolute perfection.* With this, as

* In the distance behind the old man a shepherd tends his flock in a plain bounded by water and hills, whilst to the right, on a rising ground, a house stands near some trees. The picture, half as long as it is broad, *i.e.* as 3½ to 6, and somewhat blanched by time, but otherwise in good preservation, is painted on canvas with figures under life size. Vasari (xiii. 25), who saw it at Faenza, in the house of Giovanni di Castel Bolognese, says it was

with the "Bacchanals," a subsequent age of painters displayed a rare and unflagging sympathy; and we possess in Rome alone two copies of it, whilst England and Germany boast one apiece.*

There is nothing more alluring to the student who laboriously tracks the works of Titian than the opportunity which his study affords of coming suddenly upon one of those contrasts that so strikingly illustrate the master's versatility. After wandering amidst orchards, and admiring the sunny island in which Eros disports himself; after lingering in the calm noon of the paradise, in which the "Three Ages" are set, he turns to admire the charms of his "Virgin's Rest, near Bethlehem," which adorns our National Gallery. Here he beholds a delightful group of Scripture figures reposing in the corner of

painted for that person's brother-in-law. It subsequently came into the hands of the Cardinal of Augsburg (Sandrart, Acad. Nob. Artespict. fol. Nur. 1683, p. 165), and subsequently into those of Queen Christine (Campori, Raccolta de' Cataloghi, p. 344), thence into the Orleans collection, from which it was purchased for the Bridgewater, now Ellesmere, collection in London. Giovanni di Castel Bolognese, we learn from Aretino's Cortigiana, p. 90 (Quattro comedie del divino P. Aretino, 8vo, Ven. 1588), lived for a time at Venice, and was a patron of Luigi Anichini.

* The copy in the Doria Palace is much injured, but clearly by an imitator or a copyist. Another in the Borghese Palace is ascribed by some to Giorgione, by others to Sassoferrato. Yet another, once in the Manfrini collection at Venice, and subsequently in the gallery of Mr. Barker, passed into the hands of the Earl of Dudley, and bears the name of Giorgione. But the sharp tones and hasty execution might suggest the hand of P. Lanzani, or a follower of the Dossi. Whether any one of the above is the picture described by Martinioni (see his ed. of Sansovino's Ven. Descr., p. 377) and Campori (Racc. de' Catal., p. 443), in the Renier collection at Venice in the seventeenth century, it is impossible to say.

a broad sweep of country, where cloud nature seems to have been caught and fixed in a moment of grand display. The view stretches over a wide expanse of plain, rolling back to a chain of hills, upon which light and shade are magically playing. "The billowy ranges" are thrown into prominence, "now smiling in sunshine, now frowning in shadow,"* a gleam here and there "touching into brightness a cottage or a castle."† The hour is late, the sun low, as it pierces the grey strips of mist, and sheds its slanting rays on a far-off peak. Near the margin of a lake cattle are lowing; sheep are nibbling the stubble; and a startled shepherd looks up to see the angel on the red edge of a cloud, announcing the coming of the Saviour. A knoll to the left is partly covered with tufts of trees, and here, in a quiet nook, the Virgin sits and takes a bunch of flowers from the little Baptist, whilst St. Catherine, radiant with joy, looks at the infant Christ on its mother's lap. It has been said that Titian was not a religious painter, and he certainly sometimes deserves the charge; yet here we are transported into a scene almost heavenly in the fullness of its pathos and loveliness, and there is true solemnity and religious grandeur in the tender feeling which enlivens a group in keeping, yet in contrast, with a landscape of delicious lines, whose enamelled greys so delicately harmonize with the rich blues, yellows, and crimsons of the dresses in the figures. We can fancy such a scene touching the heart of Alfonso of Este, nor should we be surprised

* Gilbert's Cadore, p. 36. † Ibid.

to learn that this masterpiece was one of those which tempted Charles the Fifth and roused the cupidity of his secretary, Covos. Like the portrait of Alfonso it was, perhaps, matter of negotiation in the later years of Alfonso's reign, and certainly—though an early work and full of the polish which Titian's early work displayed—it came no doubt sooner into the Escurial than the "Bacchanals" of the ducal studio.*

Equally significant as a revelation of the poetry which lay hid in the breast of the master, the "Noli Me Tangere" of the National Gallery, also leads us back to the days of Titian's youthful striving. If in the "Three Ages" we conceive the landscape attuned to the figures, here we see the figures thrown with sparkling lightness upon a beautiful vista of undulating country. The scene is laid in a dip of hills near the shore of a bay, the distant unrippled surface of which is tinged with the deep pure blue of an evening sky, scantily flaked with cloud. On a hill to the right is a clump of farm buildings, from which a road descends. Here a dog follows his master, whilst a shepherd to the left—

"ranges the valley free."

* This picture on canvas, 3 ft. 3½ in. high, by 4 ft. 7½ in. wide, is numbered 635, and signed TICIAN, and bears the Escurial mark, No. 78, Di Titi°. It came into the Coesvelt collection, belonged in 1720 to the Duke of Noailles in Paris, and passed into the Baucousin collections before it was purchased for the National Gallery in 1860. We may note some coarse drawing in the foot of the Baptist, some abrasion in the yellow dress of St. Catherine, and in the Virgin's head. A copy by Pietro da Cortona is No. 57 in the Gallery of the Capitol at Rome. The original was engraved by Audran. (Compare Mariette's Annotations to the Abecedario of Orlandi.)



NOLI ME TANGERE.

National Gallery.

[*Vol. I.*, *p.* 208.

In the bends of the ground the bushes are toned to the dusk of the gloaming. In strong relief upon the sky an oak sapling throws out its boughs and jagged leafage, the trunk rising from a brown tinged knoll, clothed with verdant grasses, in the foreground of which Christ appears to the Magdalen. There may be some affectedness in the form of the Saviour, who stands slightly covered with a hip-cloth and gathering with his left the folds of his blue mantle, whilst he grasps the hoe with his right. But his shape is fair, and the flesh is surprisingly modelled in silver tones broken with tender greys. We may feel disappointed by sketchy extremities and neglected drawing; but there is rare beauty in the mild and regular features, which are lighted with compassion as Christ looks down and utters the words. The Magdalen seems to have trailed up to Christ on her knees, and raises her hand to touch him as she rests her left with the ointment-pot on the ground, her attitude full of longing as she stretches forwards and gazes with half-open lips. One cannot look without transport on the mysterious calm of this beautiful scene, which Titian has painted with such loving care yet with such clever freedom. The picture is like a leaf out of Titian's journal, which tells us how he left his house on the canals and wandered into the country beyond the lagoons, and lingered in the fresh sweet landscape at eventide and took nature captive on a calm day at summer's end. It is the perfection of that poetic scenery which, in early years, attracted

him and grew into a background to "Artless and Sated Love." *

Yet neither the "Noli me Tangere," nor the "Three Ages," nor any of the minor works of this time, were those upon which Titian was expending the full flow of energy of which he was possessed. The truly noble creation which absorbed his thoughts and taxed his powers, was the "Assumption of the Virgin" at the Frari, the great and splendid altar-piece which laid the foundation of his fame at Venice, and gave him the first rank amongst the artists of his country. There is nothing more striking, if we look back at the masterpieces of Titian's pencil, than the perfect accord which exists between the subject and his treatment of it. The "Worship of Venus," in the bright and varied scale of its tones, and the brilliant play of its lights, is a conception of a gleeful and mirthsome stamp. The "Three Ages," in the depth and calm of its allegorical meaning, appears beautifully sustained by a melodious unity of colour and a tempered atmosphere. We shall now observe a supernatural subject treated in a preternatural way; with effects of colour and of shadow suited in an eminent degree to the incident set forth for delineation, and with a

* The "Noli me Tangere," on canvas, 3 ft. 6½ in. high, by 2 ft. 11½ in. wide, No. 270 in the National Gallery, was in the Muselli collection at Verona before 1646, (Ridolfi, Marav. i. 258.) "It was at his sale in 1820 it was purchased by Mr. Rogers, who bequeathed it in 1855 to the National Gallery." (Nat. Gal. Catalogue, by R. N. Wornum, Esq.) Engravings of this picture exist, one



THE ASSUMPTION OF THE VIRGIN.

FRARI, VENICE.

To face p. 211, *Vol. I.*

form of arrangement calculated exclusively for the place of the picture's exhibition. When Donatello was required to compose a statue of the Evangelist John for a niche in the tower of Orsanmichele, he was constrained to execute the work on the level floor of his workshop; but being a man of too much experience to neglect the subtler rules of his profession, he allowed for the height of the pedestal on which the statue was to stand. On showing the figure, he was taunted with its disproportions, and threatened with a refusal of it unless it should be amended. This he promised to do, but merely raised his statue to its level, and secured a most flattering approval. The "Ascent of the Virgin," now in the Academy of Arts at Venice, is unfortunately seen under the same disadvantages as Donatello's "St. John," before it was elevated to its proper position. Neither the place nor the light is that for which Titian intended it; and the contrast between the radiance of the sky and the darkness round the tomb is lost on the one hand, whilst coarseness of outline and foreshortening—unseen in the gloom of a church—are forced unfairly into view. Yet few pictures impress us more even now with the master's power. When Sir Joshua Reynolds visited the Frari at Venice, in 1752, the "Assunta" was above the high altar, where Salviati's composition of the same subject is now displayed. He says "he saw it near, it was most terribly dark but nobly painted."* As early as

* C. R. Leslie, and Tom Taylor's Life and Times of Sir Joshua Reynolds, 8vo, London, 1865, i. p. 75.

1516, Titian had been charged with the composition of this colossal picture, for which Father Germano the guardian of the Franciscan convent of Santa Maria de' Frari, had ordered a magnificent marble frame. But he was long in finishing it, and the public was only admitted to see it for the first time on the 20th of March, 1518. It was on a day of high festival that this event occurred; St. Bernardino's Day, on which peculiar honour was done to the great preaching saint of the Franciscans, and all public offices were by order of the Senate closed.* There was a rumour abroad, that the Friars did not approve of the piece; that Titian had threatened to keep it for himself, and had only been pacified by an apology from Father Germano himself.† The crowd which thronged the church was probably for this reason greater than usual. With the crowd there went Marino Sanuto, the annalist of Venice, and the Imperial envoy Adorno, the first of whom recorded the event in his diary, whilst the second offered to take the panel off the Friar's hands.‡ We may believe it stood the test of exhibition better than the fathers expected. They kept their prize, and Titian's fame was greatly increased. An obvious peculiarity of the

* "Anno 1518 adi 20 Marzo fo S. Bernardin . . . et jeri fu messa la palla grande de l' altar de S. Maria dei Frati minori suso dipinta per Tuciano, et *prima* li fu facto atorno una opera grande di marmo a spese di Marco Zerman, che è guardian adesso. Marino Sanuto, vol. xxv., Diarij, MS., p. 333. This passage was communicated to us by the kindness of Mr. Rawdon Brown. It is printed in Ciani's Lettera inedita di Tiziano Vecellio al pittore Tiziano, *u. s.*, p. 14.

† Ridolfi, Marav. i. 212; and Soravia, Chiese di Venezia, ii. p. 28.

‡ Ibid.

"Assunta," is the prominence given to the figures of the apostles in the foreground, in spite of which the focal centre of the composition is successfully thrown back to a more distant point within the picture. It is common to observe in photographs, that near objects, and particularly objects in close proximity to the camera, acquire a certain indistinctness which leads the spectator's eye into the space beyond, where it rests on objects more minutely defined. The pictorial eye of Titian taught him to treat his subject as photographs treat nature. He made his foreground broad and undefined; the figures on it supernaturally large; the sward a blur of colour, with a few forms of weeds to indicate its character, the details lost in wide sweeps of shade and a cunning generalization of masses. The choirs of angels supporting the clouds on which the Virgin rests—the Virgin herself—are thrown back, yet the parts are visible in more detail. Whilst further still, but with a proportional faintness, the Eternal hovers amongst seraphs above the scene. During the frequent visits which Father Germano paid to Titian when engaged on this picture at the Frari, it always occurred to him to remark that the apostles were too large; Titian invariably replied, that the large size of these figures was a necessary feature in a picture intended for the decoration of a vast and imposing church.* But Titian in giving this answer was conscious of its insufficiency, for he took care to neutralize the guardian's objections by suitable

* Ridolfi, Maraviglie, i. 212.

artifices of treatment. There is nothing, in fact, so remarkable in this enchanting picture as the contrast between the apparent simplicity of the results, and the science with which these results are brought about.

Focal concentration is attained by perspective science, applied alike to lines and to atmosphere, at the same time that a deep and studied intention is discoverable in the subtle distribution of radiance and gloom. What a superficial observer might note at once would be the true semblance of nature. A more minute inquirer would admire the clever art with which cohesion is given to a multiplicity of objects, moving in a marvellous intertress of light and shade and tinting, fitfully illumined or darkened by the flitting clouds that float in a bright but changing sky. In the same gleeful way as we saw the cupids playing in an orchard sacred to Venus we now glance at angels in a higher and more spiritual region. The talent of the master seems to rise with the elevation of his subject; a more serene and purer joy animates the forms of his cherubs and seraphs, and something indescribable strikes us in the joyful innocence of the heavenly company whose winged units crowd together singing, playing, wondering and praying, some in light, some in half light, others in gloom, with a spirit of life moving them that is quite delightful to the mind and to the eye. Like the bees about their queen this swarm of angels rises with the beauteous apparition of the Virgin, whose noble face is transfigured with gladness, whose step is momentarily

arrested as she ascends on the clouds, and with upturned face and outstretched arms longs for the heaven out of which the Eternal looks down. To this central point in the picture Titian invites us by all the arts of which he is a master. The gorgeous blue and red of Mary's tunic and mantle stand out brilliant on the silvery æther vaulted into a dome supported by countless cherubs. The ministry of the angels about her is varied and eager. One raises the corner of the mantle, some play the tabor, others hold the pipes, or sing in choir, whilst others again are sunk in wonderment, or point at the Virgin's majesty; and the rest fade into the sky behind as the sound of bells fades sweetly upon the ear of the passing traveller. The very semblance of a living arch is suggested by the horizontal lie of the angels hovering over the Eternal's form, and the head of a cherub between these forming the key-stone as it were of the pictorial edifice. All but the head and arms of the Eternal is lost in the halo of brightness towards which the Virgin is ascending. He looks down with serene welcome in his face, an angel on one side ready with a crown of leaves; an archangel, swathed in drapery, on the other, eagerly asking leave to deposit on the Virgin's brow the golden cincture in his hands. The apostles we observed are in shade. An awfully inspired unanimity directs their thoughts and eyes from the tomb round which they linger to the circle of clouds beautifully supported in its upward passage by the floating shapes of the angels. St. Peter, seated and fronting the spectator, looks up

with his hands joined in prayer. To the right St. Andrew stands with his back towards us and his arms outstretched. To the left St. John steps forward with one hand on his breast. At the corner St. Paul and St. James are prominent, whilst the rest of the apostles are thrown into varied attitudes about the tomb. The forms of all are darkly relieved upon a sky as pure and as blue as if it were aloft above us instead of near the horizon. And how is this gloom attained? By means suggesting themselves to Titian as he worked on the very altar of the Frari. There, in the darkness of the church he toned and tempered the picture down to its station with colours which appear of a dull or neutral shade, or such as might be used by a painter at work with lamps, yet when seen in their place no doubt producing effects as true and transparent as we could wish. We stand in wonder before these proofs of Titian's technical skill. We contemplate with surprise the power which enabled him to concentrate on one canvas the experience of half a century of oil-painting, and produce something so thoroughly natural as to seem nature itself; a nature, too, not in its every-day dress, but in the festive garb which it dons when the sun is shining and light clouds are breaking the sheen with mellow passing shadows. We ask ourselves, is it chance or calculation that produces the result? and we answer, it can only be thought and subtle analysis; for how else could that sublimated art be attained which vies in its peculiar fashion with the ideal of plastic form acquired by the Greeks and Michaelangelo—that

something which in the person of Titian makes Venice unique amongst Italian cities, and raises *him* to a rank as high as that held by Raphael and Buonarotti. But it is not the tone or the natural reality of the groups of apostles in the "Assunta" which make up their charm exclusively. There is nothing in the works of the greatest contemporaries of Titian that gives more clear testimony of a superior power in imparting force and impulse to human beings than these groups. We look in vain for a word to express all those sensations of fear, devotion, and reverent wonder which we read in the attitude, the motion, and gesture of these apostles, and yet, judged by the antique standard, there is hardly one of the figures that would stand the test of minute examination. St. Andrew, whose colossal form occupies the centre of the foreground, would, if stripped of his flaming red robe, be a monster whose legs are attached, one knows not how or where, to the torso. St. Peter, of whom we cannot tell how or upon what he is sitting, might be very severely criticized as to the drawing and foreshortening of the legs, and especially of the right knee and foot. The same remarks might apply even to the Virgin, whose movement might be pronounced unnatural and theatrical. But all these imperfections are concealed beneath the fascinating prominence of colour and balanced light and shade, and it may well be repeated that on the altar of the Frari the whole of them would necessarily be unseen. That this is so we have abundant proof in the fact, that where an easel canvas was to be produced such as the Ariadne

of the National Gallery, no such blemishes as we note on a close inspection of the "Assunta" are visible, and the comparative freedom of the altar-piece is to be explained, not by assuming a bolder and more neglectful practice in the master, but by bearing in mind the place and destination of the picture. Sir Joshua Reynolds very justly observes: "Titian by a few strokes knew how to mark the general image and character of whatever objects he attempted. His great care was to preserve the masses of light and shade, and to give by opposition the idea of that solidity which is inseparable from natural objects."* We should add that Titian's strokes were freer and bolder or more laboured and careful according as the subject was to be seen in the twilight of a church or the clear atmosphere of a drawing room.

As to Titian's methods in painting, theories have been started in our day as numerous as the painters who copy Titian's works; and it might appear presuming at first sight to attempt to elucidate a point upon which all artists disagree. Yet, in the face of a masterpiece of such importance as the "Assunta," it is hardly possible to pass the question by without an effort to solve it.

Palma Giovine has left us the following sketch, which, though it refers to a late period of Titian's career, is still interesting and instructive: "Titian," he says, "prepared his pictures with a solid stratum

* Sir Joshua Reynolds' 11th Discourse.

of pigment, which served as a bed or fundament upon which to return frequently. Some of these preparations were made with resolute strokes of a brush heavily laden with colour, the half tints struck in with pure red earth, the lights with white, modelled into relief by touches of the same brush dipped into red, black, and yellow. In this way he would give the promise of a figure in four strokes. After laying this foundation he would turn the picture to the wall, and leave it there perhaps for months, turning it round again after a time to look at it carefully, and scan the parts as he would the face of his greatest enemy. If at this time any portion of it should appear to him to have been defective, he would set to work to correct it, applying remedies as a surgeon might apply them, cutting off excrescences here, superabundant flesh there, redressing an arm, adjusting or setting a limb, regardless of the pain which it might cause. In this way he would reduce the whole to a certain symmetry, put it aside, and return again a third or more times, till the first quintessence had been covered over with its padding of flesh. It was contrary to his habit to finish at one painting, and he used to say that a poet who improvises cannot hope to form pure verses. But of 'condiments' in the shape of last retouches he was particularly fond. Now and then he would model the light into half tint with a rub of his finger; or with a touch of his thumb he would dab a spot of dark pigment into some corner to strengthen it; or throw in a reddish stroke—a tear of blood, so to speak—to break the parts superficially.

In fact, when finishing, he painted much more with his fingers than with his brush." *

The sleight-of-hand thus attributed to Titian, by one who is known to have been his pupil, was not so completely developed in 1518 as it was thirty years later. Yet the origin of it may be traced in the "Assunta." At this period it sometimes happened that in attempting to set a limb, Titian performed but a clumsy operation. Still it is clear that when he produced his great masterpiece, he was in the enjoyment of vast technical power, and had effectually spoiled nature of some of her magic of effects. Lionardo's rule that true painting ought always to yield more pleasure the longer we look at it, was one which Titian followed. We may observe that the first process is that which Palma describes. Sweeping brush strokes in a clear scale of tone, and judicious blending of these into each other, are the foundation of the system. Each time the work was resumed the surface became more coloured; but the highest lights were not put in till very late, and when this was done the pigments were laid on very broadly, and only broken in lights by solid contrasting reds or greys, or in darks by livids and browns. The whole was then worked into fusion—attuned one might say—by thin transparent glazes on the one hand, or clouded scumbles on the other. If necessary the contours were then strengthened and the picture finished. Close inspection will reveal surprising abruptnesses

* Palma Giovine, in Boschini's Preface to the Ricche Miniere.

of contrast between broad and tint-like surface and solid touches. The smirched scumble is often visible, and when seen too near offends the eye. But the result, as a whole, is a rich sonorous harmony.*

Amongst the pictures which Titian may have begun and turned to the wall in the manner described by Palma Giovine, one deserves to be remembered. During the wars of the league of Cambrai, Treviso suffered great distress and misery from siege and blockade; but previous to the peace of 1517 its prosperity began to revive, and with its prosperity the old fondness for monumental decoration. Two of her ecclesiastical magnates, the Bishop Rossi and his vicar, the Canon Malchiostro, distinguished themselves as the leaders of this revival, and the latter especially became widely known for his bold and simultaneous patronage of two great artists. Pordenone, the best fresco painter of the Venetian pro-

* The "Assunta," No. 24, in the Venice Academy, is on panel, M. 6.90 high, by 3.60 wide, and is signed on the side of the Virgin's tomb, TICIANV F. It is said to have become very dark from the effects of time and the smoke of candles before it was removed, on Cicognara's requisition, to the Academy (Zanotto, Pinacoteca dell' Acc. Ven. fol., Ven. 1834). In the sixteenth century it was already so dimmed by various causes that Vasari said of it: "Being painted on canvas(!) and ill-kept, it can scarcely be seen" (xiii. 25). In the process of cleaning, which was applied at different times by the painters Baldassini (1817), Florian, and Querena, some of the final glazes and touches were removed. With the exception of a few re-touches, the upper part is fairly preserved. The lower is disfigured by extensive re-paintings, and amongst others the dress of St. Peter (orange) is altogether new. Dolce's statement (Dialogo, p. 64) that the picture was executed when the master was "giovanetto," is disproved by Sanuto, whose diary helps us to show that Titian at the time was forty years of age. There is a fine photograph of this piece by Naya.

vinces, and Titian, the finest colourist of Northern Italy, were both in his employ; and the picture to which our attention is now directed was ordered for the altar of a chapel in San Niccolò of Treviso, which Pordenone adorned in part with frescoes in 1519; but the commission for the piece was probably given earlier, because, if judged by the test of treatment, it belongs more nearly to the period of smooth and careful workmanship, illustrated by the "St. Mark" of the Salute than to the period of more picturesque boldness marked by the "Assunta." We may therefore suppose that the altar-piece was exhibited in 1519, it was designed before that date, laid by, resumed, and at last completed with a portrait of Malchiostro in the background, which seems to be the most modern portion of the work. An anecdote is told of Titian's fondness for a picture by Previtali, in Santa Maria del Mesco at Ceneda, which represents the Annunciation, and it was his habit to wander into the church to see it as he passed through Ceneda to Cadore.* The subject may have pleased him when composed by others; he was nearly forty when it fell to his task to compose it himself, and it must be owned his conception of the theme differed widely from that of Previtali. He lays the scene of Gabriel's appearance in the portico of a palace, the archings of which are open to a landscape of mountain and sky quite oriental in its splendour. Out of the blue heaven a dazzling sheet of rays darts down between

* Ridolfi, Maraviglie, i. 184.

the clouds to alight in the foreground of the picture on the tremulous form of the Virgin, whose left hand has dropped a book before being pressed to the bosom; but whose right instinctively clutches the mantle that would otherwise fall to the ground. Half stooping, half kneeling is the attitude of Mary, who looks "troubled" indeed, but not unaffected as she hears the angel's words. Gabriel, to the right, runs in with out-stretched wings, pointing upwards with his forefinger, and carrying the lily of purity. In the distance, between the two figures, Malchiostro kneels by the plinth of a pillar in the shadow of the colonnade, the floor of which is broken into white and red squares. The feeling that Titian's heart and soul were not in this form of subject is almost irresistible, yet we admire the skill with which he gives prominence to the contrast between the eager speed of the angel and the motionless surprise of the Virgin; nor is it possible not to feel the enchantment which he creates by a landscape of exuberant vegetation and colour, by light of magnetic brightness in the sky, and dress tints raised in tone against the clouds and ground in an artful and perfectly harmonious manner. If to this we add the charm of youth and beauty in the figures, the adventitious splendour of palatial architecture in marble walls skirted with bas-reliefs, we see that there was enough to satisfy the taste of the prelate for whom the panel was painted.* It was

* This picture is on panel, with figures of life size. It has been injured by the warping of the wood, which shows several longitudinal splits, happily above the heads of the figures, by

no serious undertaking, even in those days, for a painter to travel from Venice to Treviso. A gondola to Mestrè, a few hours' ride further west, and the journey was at an end. We cannot wonder that no record of such a trip was kept. It may be that the altar-piece was delivered when Titian was selected to value the frescoes of Pordenone on the front of a palace built at Treviso by a gentleman of the name of Ravagnino. That gentleman had been asked to pay fifty ducats for Pordenone's labour, and protested that the work was not worth the money. Titian, who went *ex officio* to tax it, convinced Ravagnino that he had been well served for a small charge, and this alone would prove that the relations of two artists, who were at a future date to live in enmity, were not at this time of a hostile character.*

Titian in the meanwhile was becoming a public man at Venice in every sense of the word. The

cleaning and re-painting. The Virgin, in white veil, red tunic, and blue mantle, is disfigured to some extent by retouches on the right hand, right eye and cheek. The figure of Malchiostro, besides being stippled up in several places, is re-painted in the forehead; and the feet of the angel are much damaged by new colour. On the skirting behind, and to the left of the Virgin, the arms of Malchiostro are affixed, with the letters B. M. beneath them.

* Ridolfi, Marav. i. 147 & 229, notes these facts. He also states that Titian painted a resurrection on the wall of the Duomo, above the school of the Sacramento; and there are traces now of a Christ rising from the tomb with a banner in his hand, between two windows of a house facing the cathedral. Beneath this figure there are remains of two of the guards, and at the sides corroded outlines of two figures of saints. The state of this fragment is such as to make any opinion as to the authorship venturesome; yet the fresco might, as far as one can see, be assigned to Pennacchi, or other moderns, with as much reason as to Titian.

praises of the crowds which visited the Frari, the frequent visits of Tebaldi, the coming of the Duke of Ferrara to Venice and his conferences with the painter, were all calculated to remind the Signoria that Titian had long been painter laureate of the State, without yielding any service in return. At the Hall of Great Council it appeared that nothing had been done for years; and there was no symptom of any intention on the master's part to prosecute his labours. Out of a period of protracted lethargy, the Signoria now rose suddenly into a state of menacing wakefulness. On the 3rd of July 1518 Titian was called to the Salt Office, and there curtly informed:—"that unless he began at once or within a week to work at the canvas in the Hall of Great Council which had been neglected for so many years, and unless he should proceed to labour at it continuously till its completion, 'their magnificences' would cause it to be painted and finished at Titian's expense."* Awful as the threat appeared, it failed to move the painter in any way. He had orders for great altar-pieces at Ancona and Brescia, commissions from the Duke of Ferrara, and more to do perhaps of which we have now no cognizance, yet he hurried himself for no one, trudging on leisurely without turning a hair or allowing himself to be moved by entreaties or threats. We saw how the Duke of Ferrara was lashing himself into fury in September, 1519, expressing his surprise at

* Lorenzi, *u. s.*, p. 171.

Titian's neglect, and declaring his intention to resort to compulsory means.* Titian treated this display of anger with great coolness, went off on a trip to Padua, and only returned in October to say that when the Duke's subject was sufficiently advanced, he would take it with him to its destination and finish it there. On the 22nd of October, he shipped on board of a bark which for the moderate sum of four lire took him up the Po to Ferrara.†

Titian's correspondence in 1518 has shown him accepting a commission for a picture of which Duke Alfonso gave him the incidents. The tenor of this correspondence, as well as Titian's delight at the picturesqueness of the theme suggested to his pencil, and the allusions of Tebaldi to a sketch "for a single figure," leave no doubt on the mind that the canvas about to be finished at Ferrara was the "Bacchanal" of Madrid, in which Bacchantes and their partners celebrate an orgy. A sleeping female in the foreground and a motto in the French language were probably matter of special instruction from Alfonso. It was not long since the upper classes of Italian society had been made acquainted with the poetry of Ovid and Catullus, but they showed the greatest eagerness to enjoy delineations of its more picturesque scenes. Yet in most instances the painters expanded and enlarged the legends of the poets, and it seems likely that wall-paintings and bas-reliefs of which many still exist in our day were taken as auxiliary aids to quicken

* *Antea*, p. 184.

† Records in Campori's Tiziano e gli Estensi, pp. 8 & 9.

the fancy of artists. In the ruins of Pompeii we observe Ariadne asleep on the shore of a rocky and treeless island, whilst Theseus rows away in his galley. In a bas-relief of the Vatican her recumbent form is admired by Bacchus, whose chariot is drawn by a female Centaur. The figure in the foreground of the "Bacchanal" is not in the spirit of the Pompeian wall paintings, which neither Titian nor his contemporaries had a chance of seeing, but the attitude and the position of the arms might support the idea that Ariosto or Alfonso had seen a classic "masterpiece," and obtained a sketch of it from Rome. It is curious that the same form, with slight varieties, should recur in the feast of the gods at Alnwick and in Titian's "Bacchanal;" but we still enquire whether it was the intention of Alfonso to represent Ariadne subsequent to her first discovery by Bacchus in Naxos, or to depict a Bacchante in the form given by classic art to Ariadne herself. We may believe it possible that the intention was to represent the daughter of Minos as the partner of the son of Semele and Jupiter.
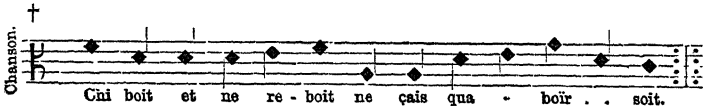
Yet we look in vain for Bacchus as an actor in the scene; and fail even to find him, unless we recognize him in one of two spectators of the orgy who lean against a tree on the left-hand side of the picture. Silenus alone is distinctly traceable as he lies on a distant hill to the right, slumbering heavily, with his hands on a vase. Ariadne reposes on the foreground to the right, insensible from the fumes of wine; and the company of Menads sport about her as the galley of Theseus sails away in the distance.

"Chi boit et ne reboit ne çais qua boir soit."*

This old version of "Fill the bumper fair" is the motto set to music before a couple in the centre of the canvas.† The Falernian juice runs in streams, fills chargers of crystal and stone, gives lightness to one, prostration to the other; and the fruits of the vine hang ripening from the trees that overshadow the landscape. It is a gorgeously coloured scene, loaded with a perfumed air intoxicating to the spectator. Ariadne's form is but the more conspicuous for the sprig of vine round her hips. She lies unconscious on the sward, her bosom exposed, her head thrown back and at rest on one of her arms. The muslin sheet upon which she is lying is half twisted about the left elbow, and the hand still clutches a cup. Drastic as an emblem of drunkenness is the indescribable action of the boy at Ariadne's side, whose head, crowned with leaves, is bent downwards as he holds aloft the fold of his tunic. To the left the votaries of Bacchus linger at a rill, which wells out at the foot of a group of trees. One totters off with a vase on his shoulder; another sits drinking from a jug; a third stoops to draw the sparkling liquid; whilst a fourth—leaning forward, and with outstretched body—pours the fluid into a glass held by a recumbent Bacchante. This matchless shape,

* "Who drinks not over and over again, knows not what drinking is."

†



with the female at her side and the man at her feet, forms the centre of the principal group in the picture. Whilst her left arm is raised, and her hand is held straight by the drawer behind her, she rests her right elbow on the ground, and with her face towards the girl who embraces her, invites her to drink or to sing; for in her hand she holds the flute, and before them is the song, and the cups in front are overturned, and the dish contains but the half of a fowl. The white muslin tunic, the ruby-red bodice and skirt set off a bosom and face of great charm, recalling those earlier types of loveliness which gave rise to the legend of Titian's fondness for Violante. And even here we are not free from the echo of this legend. In the fair one's bosom we see the violet or pansy which adorns the throat of Palma's beauty at the Belvedere, and though Titian is now at the age at which Venetian patricians entered the Senate,* Ridolfi discerns the painter's mistress in the semblance of this charming Menad; and it is not to be denied that the features are those which Titian and Palma both immortalized, though we may well believe that for both the type was but an ideal to which they clung as that of eternal youth in its choicest and most attractive shape. But Titian was not more desirous here of enticing the spectator by select form, or engaging features, and harmony of tone, than by compact grouping and a cunning wave of lines; and his power to realize instant impulse or action in very daring movement, is as consummate in its way as the

* Namely, forty years old.

subtlety with which he severs the lines by contrasts of broad shadow and breaks of sparkling light. We may note as evidence of his cleverness in connecting his dramatis personæ, that whilst the figure of the man pouring out the wine unites the drinking female in the foreground to the men behind her, a youth at her feet connects her with another and a still more picturesque group to the right; his head is turned to the dancers near him, but he grasps the Bacchante's ankles as if to force her to a share in the dance. It is a boisterous band that winds in the middle distance, changing hands in a serpentine meander to the sound of hidden music. The maddest of the party runs past in wild career; another holds a crystal jug on high, whilst a Bacchante grasps his hand, her white tunic streaming in the air and exposing her limbs. She returns the grasp of a man with a garland of leaves, presenting his back and clad in a red silk shirt. Behind this gliding spiral of dancers a tree of sparse foliage rears its boughs upon the sky, and supports the motionless form of a peahen, throwing into distance on the one hand the hill on which Silenus lies, on the other the distant mountains—Cadorine Dolomites—edging the sea on which the galley is sailing. In the middle of the distance a man reposes in company of his dog, and a broad mass of leafage spreads fan-like over the left side of the picture, leaving glimpses of sky to be seen through the partings of the trunks.*

* This picture, on canvas, M. 1·75 h. by 1.93, is No. 450 in the Madrid Museum, and has the same history as the "Worship of

Alfonso d'Este had not been more than four months a widower, when Titian took this gay picture to Ferrara. Lucretia Borgia was no longer there to condemn or approve. But in her stead there reigned a humbler yet perhaps more beautiful woman, who kept her hold of Alfonso's fickle heart from that day till he died. The Duke's behaviour to his dependents became milder and less abrupt; and with Titian especially his relations came to be smoother and pleasanter. He no longer wrote so haughtily of "the painter," nor issued such threats of compulsion as he had used before, but instead of these, kind words, and at the worst "exhortations," issued from his lips and his pen. He seemed to have more leisure too to give to art and matters connected with art, less eagerness for the intricacies of policy. His familiar correspondence at this time gives us a good insight into the daily current of Titian's life. Towards the close of

Venus" and the "Bacchus and Ariadne" of the National Gallery, of which a word later. On the edging of the white tunic of "Violante," the Escurial mark, "TICIANVS F. No. 103" (Madrazo's Catalogue, 1872, reads 101). Several figures are injured to some extent by flaying and retouching. *Ex. gr.* Ariadne, a long mending of the surface on the breast and parts about the knee and ankle, besides a bit of white drapery; the dancer in a red shirt, head and other parts; the dancing Bacchante, bits of the face; "Violante," shoulder, arms, and hands; woman at Violante's side, shoulders and arm; dancer with the crystal jug, the hands; man stooping to draw wine, and man pouring wine, more or less retouched in every part; the drinker to the left, face and arm; the sky is deprived of its patina, and altered by occasional stippling. A copy of this bacchanal was made by Varottari, which now hangs in the gallery of Bergamo. We note also a copy of the same picture assigned to Varottari in the Barbarigo collection, dispersed in 1850. Photograph of the Madrid original by J. Laurent.

the reign of Ercole the First, an attempt had been made to introduce the manufacture of pottery into Ferrara, under the superintendence of Faventine masters. The wars of the League soon led to the decay of the craft, which remained in abeyance till 1520. In that year Alfonso determined to replenish his store, and deputed Titian to inquire at Venice whether the Muranese furnaces were capable of furnishing Majolica as well as specimens of glass. Titian took the matter up with great energy, and as early as the 28th of January was able to report through Tebaldi that he had prepared the design of a vase which had been successfully burnt; and further, that on the 5th and 11th of February, after a visit to the furnaces made by Tebaldi and himself, contracts had been signed for vases and cups, which in due time would be painted, baked, and despatched to Alfonso's satisfaction. In the meanwhile, it became a part of the Duke's ambition to found a manufacture of Majolica ware in his own capital, and he applied to Titian for assistance in carrying out this scheme. Titian engaged a competent man to proceed to Ferrara, likewise an experienced master to gild the frames of his pictures in the palace of the Duke; and in this way the wishes of the patron were quickly attended to, though conclusive proof was afforded of the scarcity of skilled workmen in a rich and populous mainland city.* The Duke again had heard that a strange animal called a "gazelle" had been seen in the palace of Giovanni

* Campori, Notizie della Manifattura Estense della Maiolica, *u. s.*, p. 11, and Campori, Tiziano e gli Estensi, *u. s.*, p. 9.

Cornaro, and he wrote to Tebaldi in May to ask Titian to send him a portrait of it. Tebaldi wrote back almost by return of messenger to say that he had been with Titian to the Cornaro palace, where he was told that the gazelle was dead and its carcase thrown away, but that Giovanni Bellini had once made a sketch of the beast, which Titian was willing to enlarge and to copy.* About this time an incompetent person employed in the palace of Ferrara had the misfortune to exercise his ingenuity upon one of Titian's compositions. The varnish which he was directed to apply corroded the coloured surfaces so completely, that Tebaldi was requested to inform Titian that his presence at Ferrara would be necessary to repair the damage. Titian accordingly proceeded to the court, where he was again induced to make promise of new pictures, though he was already so completely taken up with older ones as to be unable to attend to any other.†

The works upon which he was busy—upon which indeed he must have concentrated more than usual attention—were the composite altar-piece executed for the papal legate at Brescia, considered at the time one of the most successful creations of the master's middle period, and an Adoration of the Virgin completed for San Francesco of Ancona at the request of Luigi of Ragusa, of the Venetian family of the Gozzi.

Though less important as a work of art than the Brescian panels, and beneath such masterpieces

* Tiziano e gli Estensi, p. 10. † Ibid. pp. 9–10.

as the Madonnas of San Niccolò de' Frari, or Casa Pesaro, the Virgin of Ancona deserves to be studied as embodying some of the charming playfulness which formed the attraction of Correggio's glories and stirred the duller fibre of Moretto. The picture is but half the size of the Assunta; but still over ten feet high, and painted on panel with a judicious contrast of tinting and touch and without any of the accidental variety which Titian produced later by the use of coarse canvases. To the left St. Francis stands erect with the cross in his right, and the left on his breast, his body fronting the spectator, his face turned in profile and thrown upwards to gaze at the heavens. To the right St. Blaise in episcopals, pointing heavenwards compels the attention of the patron on whose shoulder he lays his left hand; —in the background between both a view of the lagoon with Venice in the distance. A bank of clouds floating in the sky supports the Virgin and Child; and as Gabriel in purest white kneels to lift the hem of Mary's mantle, the infant Christ, whose foot is in his hand, scrambles as infants do, whose walk is tottering, to catch the hem of his mother's bodice and turn to give a blessing. Half supporting him under the arm-pit, the Virgin sits and looks down with kindly beneficence at the kneeling patron, whilst in the folds of the clouds on the right and half in the shadow of its circling vapour, a couple of playful cherubs stand, one of whom glances longingly at the Madonna, whilst the other archly pries into the group below—both holding wreaths

of flowers in their hands. In contrast with the light of this group which stands out against the sky, the figures in the foreground are worked up into relief by deep tones and shadows cutting on the clearer tint of the landscape. There is some splendid modelling in the head of the kneeling patron, whose features are beginning to age and whose hair is sprinkled with grey. Grand mastery is shown in the breadth of touch which here characterizes Titian's art. Nature itself is conveyed to the sense of the spectator by the prayerful attitude and glance. St. Blaise in an impulsive action suggests a deep and worshipping admiration of the vision to which he points with his right hand. The eye wanders naturally from the foreground, with its bold large vegetation, over alternate bands of light and shadow—as if the undulating country was striped with gloom by passing clouds when the sun falls low in the heavens, yet still shows its disk above the horizon; —the atmosphere and all that it bathes warm in its glow, yet beginning to darkle as evening sets in.*

The altar-piece of Brescia, begun at the same time as that of Ancona, but built up of several panels, occupied more of Titian's time, and caused a good deal of heart burning between him and the Duke

* Since the text was written, this altar-piece has been removed from San Francesco to an altar in San Domenico of Ancona. It is on panel, arched at the top, 10 ft. 5½ in. high, by 6 ft. 8½ in. wide, inscribed on a cartello in the middle of the foreground:

"Aloyxius Gotius Ragusinus
fecit fieri
M.DXX.
Titianus Cadorinus pinsit."

The colours are hardened down and somewhat dulled by age.

of Ferrara. At the very time when Alfonso was addressing letters of violent remonstrance to the painter for his delays in delivering the "Bacchanal," Tebaldi had discovered that the cause of the delay was a commission from the papal legate Altobello Averoldo, with whom Titian had already had a long and difficult negotiation.* At a subsequent period similar delays were found to have arisen from the very same cause. During his last visit to Ferrara Titian had promised to paint the "Bacchus and Ariadne" for the Duke's studio, yet after his return had omitted to take the canvas in hand. On the 17th of November, 1520, Alfonso was induced to write to his agent Tebaldi to remind Titian of his promise, and as this letter very clearly illustrates a change of tone in the Duke's communications to the painter, it deserves to be quoted.

"Messer Jacomo. Make it your business to speak with Titian and remind him that he made promises when leaving Ferrara which he has not thought fit as yet to keep. Amongst other things he said he would paint a canvas which we expect to receive, and as we do not deserve that he should fail in his duty, exhort him to proceed so that we shall not have cause to be angry with him, and let means be found to obtain our canvas immediately." †

Titian excused himself on the ground that he had neither canvas nor framework nor measures, protesting that he had had the very best intentions, but thought his Excellency no longer cared for the work,

* Campori, Tiziano e gli Estensi, p. 8. † Ibid., p. 10.

adding that if the materials were sent him at once, he would try to deliver the picture on the next Ascension day. But Tebaldi, ill convinced of the truth of these excuses, and knowing that Titian had already finished a figure of St. Sebastian for the papal legate, which had been the talk of Venice for several days, jestingly taunted the painter with the remark that his reasons for idleness were as artful as his pencils, and told him plainly that it was his belief, he no longer prized the service of Ferrara since he had touched the money of the priests. Titian replied: "To please the Duke he would coin base money, and nothing would induce him to fail in his duty to the prince." Upon this Tebaldi asked him seriously whether it were true that he had painted a St. Sebastian as handsomely as people said, whereupon Titian replied that it was so, that he had done that figure with all the skill of which he was master, and he thought it was about the best thing he had ever laid hand to, and yet, he continued, the whole altar-piece would bring him but 200 ducats, whilst the St. Sebastian alone was worth that sum, and nothing in the world that he could do for priests or for friars would induce him to neglect his Excellency, for whom he was willing to work night and day. After taking leave Tebaldi became curious to see the St. Sebastian of which he had heard so much, and having ascertained that a day had been fixed by the artist to exhibit it to his friends, he joined the party and heard Titian declare that he had never done anything better. This in-

duced Tebaldi to think that he might persuade the master to part with his treasure to the Duke. He therefore waited till the company dispersed, and asked Titian whether it was not labour lost to give such a picture to priests and send it to Brescia—when the Duke of Ferrara was there to take it off his hands. Titian at first was indignant. He did not know how he could be supposed "capable of such a theft." Tebaldi, unabashed, replied he would show him the way to do it, and suggested that a replica should be painted for the Legate, with some alterations.* Titian, however, refused to listen to the plan, and Tebaldi left the house without accomplishing his purpose. But the temptations of men high in station and influence are sometimes too much for virtuous resolves. Titian, whose first impulse had been honest, was not proof against the renewed importunities of his patron. Tebaldi had written to Alfonso describing the St. Sebastian and suggesting secrecy, lest "the priests" should hear of the matter and carry off the panel from Titian's workshop. The Duke encouraged his agent to secure the prize within his reach, and Titian succumbed to the vulgar bait of sixty ducats in ready money. Both parties had ample reason to regret their share in this transaction. Alfonso recoiled at the last moment from the risk of making an enemy of the Legate. Titian was mortified to think that he had yielded to temptation without any corresponding profit.

* Tebaldi to Alfonso, Dec. 1, 1520, in Campori's Tiziano e gli Estensi, p. 11.

Before Christmas, Tebaldi received a letter from the Duke, with orders to communicate the contents to Titian.

"Let him know," says Alfonso, "that we have thought over the matter of the St. Sebastian, and resolved that we shall not do this injury to the Reverend the Legate. Let him think on the other hand of serving us well in the work which he has on hand for us, as we do not mean to burthen him with more for the present, and we have to remind him of the head which he began at our bidding before he left Ferrara."* A canvas and a present of twenty-five scudi preceded the despatch of this letter, and from a reply subsequently made by Tebaldi, we ascertain that "the head" was a half length on panel which Titian had promised to enlarge so as to include "an elbow and a part of a left hand."† We thus perceive that Titian was under agreement to finish several pictures for the Duke of Ferrara, whilst preparing an altar-piece for the Legate. But this was not the whole of the weight which rested on his shoulders. The Venetian government was still in expectation of the canvas of "The Battle;" and Jacomo da Pesaro, the painter's old friend and patron, was pressing for an altar-piece upon which several advances had been made in 1519.‡ We might expect under these circumstances to learn that Titian took the earliest oppor-

* Alfonso to Tebaldi, from Ferrara, Dec. 23, 1520, in Campori, Tiziano e gli Estensi, p. 12.

† Ibid.

‡ See Appendix. Compare also Selvatico, Guida di Venezia, 8vo, Ven., p. 181.

tunity at his command to rid himself of his burden, or at least satisfy some of the older demands before he entered upon new engagements. But nothing of the kind occurred. Not the representations of Alfonso, not the claims of the government of "Baffo," or Averoldo, were sufficient to bind him. He longed for the air of the hills, and he went off it would seem in 1521 to Conegliano to paint the front of the Scuola di Santa Maria Nuova, for which he was remunerated with the freehold of a house.* In the midst of these occupations the Doge who had governed Venice for twenty years died (June 22), and on the 6th of July, 1521, Antonio Grimani was elected successor to Leonardo Loredano.

* On the back of a drawing in the collection of the Düsseldorf Academy, we find the following lines: "Del 1521 fui chiamato a Conigliano dalla scola de Santa Maria Nova p̃ dipingeli a fresco la facciata di detta scola, et per premio de le mie fattiche mi fu allogatta una casa posta in contrã dell Arfosso la qual casa era di razion di ditta scola, qual casa deve esser liberamente di me Titian di Vecelli di Cadore, de miei eredi p̃ sempre et in perpetuo come apar dal istrum.

"Et detta Cassa l'ho tutta dipinta dentro e fuori de mia m. . . ."

The drawing, on dark blue grey paper, represents a saint with staff and book in the right hand, and the left hand on the breast; the head, with long hair and beard, in profile to the right. Professor Krahe purchased the drawing at Rome at the close of last century; it was originally in the collection of Carlo Maratta. It may be said in reference to the genuineness of the writing on the sheet, that the name of the painter is spelled Titianus, which at this period is unusual. Yet if the writing be a forgery, it is a very clever one, for the hand is exactly that of Titian.

CHAPTER VII.

Antonio Grimani, his life; he becomes Doge.—Portraits of him by Titian.—The "Resurrection" at Brescia.—The "St. Sebastian" and Portrait of Bishop Averoldo.—Titian begins the "Bacchus and Ariadne."—Alfonso d' Este asks him to Ferrara and Rome.—Attempt to purchase the "St. Sebastian."—Remonstrance of the Council of Ten at Titian's neglect.—He loses and recovers the Broker's Patent.—Titian takes the "Bacchus and Ariadne" to Ferrara.—Description of the Picture.—What became of the "Bacchanals."—Laura Dianti and Alfonso.—Flora at the Uffizi.—"Venus" of Darmstadt and Companion Pieces.—"Venus Anadyomene."

ANTONIO GRIMANI, elected Doge at the age of eighty-seven, was the first prince of Venice whose likeness Titian, in his official capacity, was called upon to paint.* There was never perhaps a sitter whose face bore a more distinct character, or more surely displayed the marks of a long and cunning fight with fortune. Before the age at which Venetian patricians claimed a seat in the senate Grimani had visited every market in the Mediterranean and acquired enormous wealth. At Rome in 1493 he gave his son Domenico 25,000 ducats to buy a cardinal's hat. His own claim to office was recognised at Venice in 1494, when he was elected a "procurator," and captain-general

* Vasari says (xiii. 27): "Ritrasse [Titian] di naturale il principe Grimani ed il Loredano." Ridolfi (Marav. i. 213) says the same thing, but if this be true as to Loredano, we find no trace of the fact in the public accounts, and there is no portrait of Loredano by Titian in existence.

of the fleet. In this capacity he served with distinction against the Turks. Though loath to accept a second command, he was again elected a captain-general in 1499, and reluctantly assumed the dangerous honour. In August, the Turkish and Venetian squadrons lay watching each other near the coast of Greece. The Turks, with 260 ships, were covering the Sultan's forces investing Lepanto; the Venetians, with 200 sails, waiting for an opening to attack the Turks. Unfortunately jealousies divided Grimani from his subordinate Andrea Loredano, who had left Corfu without orders; yet received an ovation on joining the fleet. According to some authorities, the captain-general allowed Andrea to engage, and then withheld his support; according to others, Grimani was paralyzed by the disobedience of his subordinates. The Venetians were beaten, Lepanto fell; and a Turkish squadron sailed victoriously into the Gulf of Patras. When the news of this defeat reached Venice the people burst into a paroxysm of fury, and mobs paraded the streets cursing Grimani as the "ruin of Christianity." Marchio Trevisani was solemnly appointed to supersede him; and orders were despatched to send the luckless admiral in fetters home. In the meanwhile Grimani's command had expired, and word came from Corfu that he was sailing for the Lido in the admiral's ship. At Parenzo he was met by one of his sons, Vincenzo, who informed him that a decree had been issued by the Senate, requiring him to surrender his galley and return home in a transport. Fearing lest neglect of this order—though unintentional—might

cost Antonio his life, Vincenzo put his father into irons with his own hands, and took him in a pilot-boat to Venice, where he arrived at sunset on the 2nd of November, escorted to the Riva by the captains of the port castles. Domenico, the cardinal, in his rochet came out to meet the prisoner, but the mob which filled the quays threatened to stone the admiral; and the wretched occupant of the pilot-boat was only saved from death by hiding under the thwarts of its bow. At six o'clock Antonio Grimani, in a jacket and short red hose, bare-legged and fettered, was landed by torchlight in presence of the Avogadori and chiefs of the Ten and taken to gaol, where Vincenzo and Domenico were allowed to watch him as he lay shivering with fever in a cell with a grated window. For months Grimani endured confinement. He was tried in summer, and despatched in autumn to an island prison near Cherson in the Black Sea. In 1502 he escaped to Rome, where he lived with his son the Cardinal for several years. The part which he took in reconciling Venice with the Papal See after the League of Cambrai entitled him to a pardon, and on the 26th of July, 1509, he appeared publicly in the College of Pregadi. In 1510 he was re-elected Procurator of St. Mark, *de supra;* and in 1521 he beat all his adversaries for the Dogeship.* Three or four times within the short period of one year ten months and two days, Titian painted Grimani's portrait as Doge; once—we may think—for the

* Compare Malipiero, Annali, i. 163—198; Marin Sanuto's Diarii, iv. 124; Cicogna Iscriz., Ven., i. 170, and vi. 123; and Sansovino, Cronicon, p. 55.

workshop, once for the Ducal Palace, twice for the private collections of the Grimani family. Three of these portraits exist, one in the house of Count Giustiniani at Padua, another in possession of Mr. de Rosenberg at Vienna, a third in the Morosini-Gattersburg collection at Venice. One needs to be guarded in speaking of pictures which have suffered injury from time and neglect, and in this class the "Grimani" of Count Sebastian Giustiniani must necessarily be placed, but the portrait is easy of identification, and could not be mistaken for that of any other Doge. Antonio Grimani stands at an opening, in the cap and ermine of office, his head slightly turned to the right, his right hand with a ring on the forefinger on a parapet before him. A brown curtain partly conceals with its repainted folds the repainted ground of a dark room. From the remains of a picture, which appears once to have been beautiful, it is clear that the likeness was originally executed with great freedom and vigour, and —though rapidly—still completely finished, but unhappily the canvas is so damaged by scaling and retouching of flesh and daubing of subordinate parts, that caution is imposed on the critic, who can say no more than that there is reason to believe this was one of the heirlooms of Titian's house, transferred by Pomponio Vecelli to the Barbarigos, and as such, having claims to be considered a work of the master.*

* See *antea*, p. 114. The canvas is M. 1.17 h. by 1.0. Almost the whole of the cheek to the left of the nose, and all the fingers of the hand, have lost their original pigment. On the face of the parapet, beneath the Doge's hand, are the modern words: ANTONIVS. GRIMANVS VENETIAR, DVX. The figure of Grimani is of life size.

In the Rosenberg example Titian is not content to reproduce the form, he goes deeper and creates something that reminds us of the spirit, the life, and the misfortunes, of his sitter. The Doge is near a table relieved against the dark ground of a wall in part concealed by the festoons of a red hanging. His shorn crown is covered with the ducal hat, and a broad mantle of ermine swathes his large and bony frame. The table itself is enlivened by the kaleidoscopic colours of a Turkish cloth, on which a lemon and a letter are thrown, showing off the Doge's gloved hand just issuing from beneath the fur and grasping a white pocket handkerchief with something of the subtle strength and clutch of a panther. The gaunt head with its grand and toothless jaw seems worn by every sort of care, yet still prepared to defy them all. The nose is short but thin, and the nostril dilates as the lipless mouth spans itself into a single line; and the coal black eye glances sharply from out of wrinkled flesh and a hoary brow. Turned to the right the eye follows the direction of the face looking out into distance, as if to scan that fatal battle of Sapienza which produced to him dishonour, fetters, and exile. Old beyond the time when man is permitted to appear lithe and erect, Grimani reminds us of those moss-grown trees that look as if they had resisted and might still resist the storms of centuries.

There can be no reason to doubt that this portrait is the same as that noted in the Barbarigo collection by Ridolfi (Marav. i. 262); and it is to be remembered that Ridolfi says that this, and the portraits of Paul III., Philip II., Francis I., and the Doges Antonio Grimani and Andrea Gritti were preserved in Titian's house till he died.

His form is erect and tough; his look piercing, his expression a mixture of strength and cunning. The sap is running low beneath the scanty covering of flesh on his brow, but there is life in the channels yet—life in the firm set of the mouth, life in the glance; and Titian displays this life, its subtlety and power, with incomparable skill, disdaining tricks of brush, throwing a golden light over the face, giving the strained and shrivelled skin its place and value by delicate shades of half-tone and shadow modelled with substantial pigments into planes as if nature had been taken cleverly, instinctively, and at a glance, to be reproduced on canvas. In the Morosini replica the qualities are the same. It may be that Mr. de Rosenberg's was injured and retouched. It looks less warm and sunny than its counterpart, but the figure in the latter seems older and might have been painted later.* In what respect either of them differed from that which Titian executed for the Hall of Great Council it is not in the power of anyone now to say. We only know that he received twenty-five ducats for it on the 3rd of June 1523, and that the money was paid to him by order of the "capita," out of the treasury of the Salt Office.†

* Mr. de Rosenberg's portrait of Antonio Grimani, of life size to the knees, and on canvas, was an heirloom in the Grimani Palace at Venice till 1873, though sold by Countess Berchtold as early as 1871. It is injured by tinting, re-touching, and bad varnishes. The hand is particularly damaged. The letter on the table is repainted in white. The replica in Casa Morosini-Gattersburg exhibits some slight varieties. The hand is bare, and holds a pair of gloves, and there is no red hanging in the background.

† The record is in Lorenzi, p. 176. The picture perished by fire. Besides these likenesses of Grimani as Doge, there were others assigned to Titian, which represented him as "Admiral in

Grimani's life as a doge had been so short that Titian was not able to paint the votive picture usually considered as the prince's due. Many years elapsed before this mishap was repaired, and it was not till Francesco Venier ascended the Ducal throne in 1555 that justice was done in this respect; but then the memory of Grimani's services outweighed that of his offences, and Titian was fain to represent him as a martyr whose sufferings deserved to be symbolized with the cup and the cross.

Meanwhile the altar-piece of the legate Averoldo had been completed and delivered in 1522 to its owner; and there the Venetian public observed for the first time classicism imitated from the antique combined with the realism which charmed Bassano and Paolo Veronese. In due time this grand work was carried to Brescia and placed on the high altar of St. Nazaro e Celso, where it long remained an object of study to the artists of the Brescian school. Whether the form which the altar-piece assumed was suited to the genius of Titian may be doubted, for Titian was always at his best before a large single canvas upon which he could group his figures at will, and we have to judge him subject to this important consideration; but, given the theme and a framing of panels united to form one composition, it was difficult to proceed otherwise than Titian here proceeded. The "Resurrection" as a pictorial subject cannot be treated with

Apulia" (1498), and as procurator after the repair of the Campanile of St. Mark (1510); and these portraits, according to Cicogna (Isc. Ven., i. 362), belonged in this century to Count Ignazio Bevilacqua of Verona.

the same freedom as the "Ascension" or the "Transfiguration." It will not bear horizontal expansion for the introduction of extraneous figures, and necessarily requires height rather than breadth. Titian, for this reason, made the central picture of the "Resurrection" higher than the lateral panels representing St. Sebastian and Averoldo with his patron saints, and he overtopped both the latter with half-lengths of the Angel and Virgin Annuntiate. Thus the central figure of the altar-piece is Christ on the clouds rising from the sepulchre, with the banner in his hand, the marble tomb out of which he came lying half concealed beneath a grass-grown crag, in front of which a soldier looks up in surprise, whilst a second, with his back to the spectator, awakes and clutches as he rises the stump of an ivy-bush. At some distance below the height the Maries wander in a landscape illumined by a lurid red sky, in which heavy clouds are driven by gusts of wind that bend the branches of a tree, shake out the folds of the Redeemer's hip-cloth, and belly out the standard of the cross. To the left St. Nazarus looks up, whilst St. Celsus, in steel armour, turns to show the ascending Redeemer to the kneeling Averoldo; and to the right St. Roch, comforted by an angel, in a landscape in front of which St. Sebastian is bound to a tree, his right arm fastened at the elbow above the head, his left on a level with the hip, his breast wounded with one arrow, and the writhing frame only rested momentarily by means of the right foot, which is raised to the edge of a broken pillar.

It is easy to fancy that some of these panels might

be viewed by Titian's contemporaries without any feeling of novelty or surprise. They might admire indeed the realism of design and colour in the "Resurrection," the concentrated richness of tc and the force of the drawing in the Christ, but the scene in its component parts would have little that was new or striking to them; whilst they might feel a certain repugnance for a mode of delineation undoubtedly giving to the holiest of impersonations the muscular development of an athlete, the attitude, the air, and theatrical movement of an actor. But every other fault would doubtless be compensated in their eyes by the beauty of the annuntiate angel, the grandeur of the portrait of Averoldo, and the skilful adaptation of the plastic modelling of the Greeks to the form of St. Sebastian.

As a display of harmonious colours with bands of light streaking predominant shadow, the figure of the annuntiate angel might alone account for certain permanent effects in the pictures of Moretto and Savoldo. It represents a young, handsome, joyous, and regular profile, the richness of whose nature is shown in full flesh and luxuriant locks; a shape instinct with life and motion, admirably drawn, and painted with consummate art, the whole being graceful,—in its outline, in its features, and dress, but more than all in the elasticity of its action as it shows with both hands the waving scroll on which the words are written: "Ave Gratia plena." The cross light which illuminates a mere strip of the contours and dress throws the face and the blue tunic into a richly

coloured shadow full of subtle variety, giving to planes and foreshortenings a delicate gradation, and marking with sufficient force the accidental changes in the tones of drapery, so that the whole becomes a marvel of grace and lightness thrown off with harmonious depth against the clear æther of a light sky. It is not too much to say that this emanation of Venetian art in its highest development shows us something akin to the elevation which usually resides in work of the classic time, and recalls that spirit which displays itself in Raphael's "Liberation of St. Peter" at the Vatican. At a later time Titian became more openly and more daringly naturalistic; —he was never more winning. The skill with which the pigments are handled, the richness, the depth, and transparence of the colours are unsurpassed.

With less sparkle, but full of mild serenity, the opposite figure of the Virgin is a charming profile, in which reverence and calm are ably contrasted with the open joyousness of the annuntiate angel. For portrait character and texture—black silk pitted against steel armour,—the panel in which Averoldo and his patron saints are represented is admirable.

Titian flattered himself that the martyred St. Sebastian was the best thing he had ever done. The public flattered Titian by sharing his opinion; and numerous replicas or copies show how deep and lasting this impression was; yet we shall probably not be wrong in thinking that the daring of the painter and the novelty of his attempt to transform an antique statue into a Christian Saint was at the bottom of this

admiration. In its earliest form this figure of St. Sebastian was fastened to a pillar and not to a tree. "The body," Tebaldi writes to the Duke of Ferrara, "is bound with one arm high up, the other low down, *to a column;* the whole frame writhes in such a way as to display almost all of the back. In all parts of the person there is evidence of suffering, and all from one arrow that sticks in the middle of the body. I am no judge, because I do not understand drawing, but looking at the limbs and muscles the figure seems to me to be as natural as a corpse." *

We may admit the grandeur of Titian's style, his skill in foreshortening, and his quickness in reproducing muscle in a state of momentary tension; but whatever merit may be conceded in this respect, want of originality in action and lack of nature in movement are not the less defects that might have been avoided. We are not only reminded of the Medicean Faun, but we feel the presence of the model strung up by the elbows into an artificial posture. The strain betrayed in the cramp of the toes on the edge of the column, and the muscular contraction of the leg on the ground, are in direct contrast with the flexible droop of a wounded and sinking form which we expect to see on this occasion. Successful or not the figure still indicates a step in the direction which was so decidedly taken in later years by Titian. It foreshadows the daring tricks of position which are played with such cleverness in the ceilings of the Salute. But we may find full compensation even for this in the successful

* Tebaldi to Alfonso, in Campori, Tiz. e gli Estensi, p. 11

art with which light is concentrated; and it is characteristic that though most of the flesh surfaces are thrown into the comparatively dark shade of half tone and reflexes, yet the brightness and warmth of the whole is such as to produce a brilliant relief against the pure clear sky of the background.* When Tebaldi suggested a repetition of the subject with varieties, he touched a chord that readily vibrated in the frame of Titian. The master and his scholars were not slow to observe the current of public taste. They made replicas in sufficient numbers to supply the demand, and one of these replicas still exists in the collection of Lord Elcho.† In some later copies, two

* This altar-piece was recently removed from its place on the high altar, and hung in a bad light between the windows of the choir. The figures are all life size, and were subjected to restoring in 1819 by Girolamo Romani (see P. Brognoli's Nuova Guida di Brescia, 8vo, Brescia, 1826, pp. 133, 277). The "Resurrection" is most injured of all the panels, being painted over or retouched in the figures as well as in the sky, so that the "Christ" has become very hard and dark, and the foreground very black. In other panels, *ex gr.*, in that of Averoldo and his patron saints, and the Virgin annuntiate, bleaching has altered some of the coloured surfaces. The "St. Sebastian" is best preserved. On the circular base of the column we read, "TICIANVS FACIEBAT, MDXXII." Ridolfi notes (Maraviglie, i. 344), and Chizzola (Pittura di Brescia, 8vo, Brescia, 1760, p. 58) confirms, that there were shutters to the altar-piece, and that these shutters were adorned with figures of angels playing instruments, and the patron saints of the church, Nazaro and Celso, bearing the palms of martyrs, the whole by Moretto. There are line engravings of all the panels in the collected work of Alessandro Sala.

† Lord Elcho's replica on canvas is a little smaller than the original at Brescia. It is not, as erroneously stated by Waagen (Treasures, ii. 83), the picture which was once in Charles I.'s collection. A smaller repetition of the figure, on canvas (26 inches high), also belongs to Lord Elcho, and is catalogued as Titian's original sketch. But here the left arm is straight, the angel and St. Roch are omitted, and the distance is a mountainous land

archers were substituted for the angel attending St. Roch; and in this form the composition was preserved to us by a late disciple of the school after the original, painted in 1530, had been lost in the dispersion of the collection of Charles the First.*

Towards the close of December, 1521, Alfonso of Este became very weary of abusing Titian by proxy; and, wishing above all things, to secure the "Bacchus and Ariadne," for which he had sent the canvas and framing, he gave the painter an invitation to visit Ferrara at Christmas. Titian, who was instructed to bring his work with him and finish it on

scape; and it is probable that the so-called sketch is a free copy by a later painter. A copy—life size on canvas—of the original, under the name of Moretto, is exhibited in the Tosi collection at Brescia. It is damaged by cleaning and re-touching, and may be by a follower of Moretto. A copy of this again, No. 589, in the Lichtenstein Gallery at Vienna (canvas, M. 1.71 high by 0.70), is probably identical with that which some years ago belonged to Abate Fenaroli at Brescia. (See Guida di Brescia, 1866, p. 105.)

* The "St. Sebastian" of Charles I.'s collection was sent to Mantua in 1530. See B. Agnello to Jacomo Calandra, Warder of Mantua, Venice, August 6, 1530, *postea*. The following entry in Bathoe's Catalogue of the Collection of Charles I. (p. 90), gives a description of the picture: "In Adam and Eve, Stair's Room. Done by Titian. Item. The picture of St. Sebastian sideling, his right arm tied upwards to a pillar and the left arm downwards, being shot with an arrow in his breast and in his shoulder, and in the calf of his leg, an entire figure so big as life; and in a landskip by it two little archers a-shooting, and afar off in the sky appearing a little angel. 6 ft. 3 in., by 3 ft. 6 in." It is obvious that this picture, which is mentioned by Ridolfi (Marav., i. 256), is not that in possession of Lord Elcho. A copy of it, apparently by Pietro Rosa, is (on canvas) in the Lecchi collection at Brescia. Here the saint (of life size) is bound to a pillar, his right foot on a square stone. There is an arrow in his breast and another in his shoulder. In a landscape of trees, interspersed with cottages, the two archers are seen. The surfaces are much injured by abrasion and re-painting.

the spot, was not in a condition to accept the honour, being, as he said, overwhelmed with orders. He accordingly sent a refusal. Tebaldi, not to be beaten, imagined a stratagem to effect his master's purpose. He reminded Titian of his wish—long since expressed—to visit Rome, and Alfonso's promise to take him there, and then said he was sure Alfonso would go to Rome to do homage to the new Pope, Leo the Tenth being dead and the papal chair being vacant since December the 1st, and if Titian were then at Ferrara the Duke would ask him to join his party; whereas if he stayed at Venice the Duke would certainly not send for him expressly. This statement apparently flattered the painter, who promised to let Tebaldi know when he should start for Ferrara. In the interval the Duke wrote (Dec. 26), to approve his agent's conduct, and told him that had he possessed the spirit of prophecy, he could not have said anything more true than that the Duke intended to visit Rome. "So soon," he added, "as the new pope is created, we shall go and throw ourselves at the feet of his Holiness, so that Titian, if he means to come, had better do so quickly, as we should like to have him with us, and he must despatch our picture quickly, as there can be no question of his doing any work on this journey." But Titian was not to be caught even with this bait, or else he had other powerful reasons for attending to business. He left Venice at Christmas, perhaps for Brescia, and was not home again till the 3rd of January, when Tebaldi found him ill of a fever, and "reduced in body by irregular living."

Titian made light of his sickness, attributing it to other causes than those invented by Tebaldi, and affected still to think he would like the trip to Rome; but he could not be brought to fix a day for leaving Venice; he merely promised that he would sail in a *burchio** for Ferrara so soon as he heard the result of the conclave; and neither he nor Alfonso were destined to see the walls of the Vatican at this period. A fresh attempt to compass the artist's journey to Ferrara failed decisively on the 17th of June, when Titian declared that he could not take a picture home in which several parts were not made out according to his fancy. Tebaldi's renewal of the attempt immediately after only emboldened Titian to ask the Duke a favour. His friend Niccolo de' Martini, he said, was fond of shooting, and wished to have a day's sport occasionally on the northern banks of the Po. The Duke might well grant his friend this favour, and in return Titian would paint on the Duke's canvas the two very best figures that he had ever done. But Tebaldi knew his master too well even to mention the matter to him, and he treated Titian's proposal as mere banter, warning him to think seriously of visiting Ferrara. Titian, for his part, added one more to the numerous promises which he had never intended to keep.

In August, the Duke was angry, and Tebaldi as usual translated his master's anger into threats. He went to the painter's workshop and stared at the

* *Burchio*, a large barge with a cabin, used in the sixteenth century for inland navigation. Venezia e le sue lagune, 4to, Ven 1847, I. i. p. 223.

blank spaces on the canvas. The car was there, drawn by animals, and two figures were completed, but the rest, including a landscape, was not even commenced, though Titian said it might be finished in a fortnight. After some chaffering, during which Titian expressed concern at having fallen into the patron's displeasure, it was arranged that the canvas should be taken to Ferrara in October, and Tebaldi upon this was proposing to go, when Titian suggested that he should under present circumstances give him a safe-conduct to travel with, as a document of this kind would be necessary for his safety. This Tebaldi seems to have thought rather flattering to Alfonso, for he wrote to the Duke that it showed Vecelli's fear of his displeasure, and then he added a string of Titian's usual asseverations that he would not accept commissions for any one, not even from "Dommenedio," till he had finished the Duke's canvas; in spite of which October was half spent before the artist even looked at the Duke's canvas, and the Duke began to rave and Tebaldi to storm as before.*

The reasons which Titian now gave for his procrastination were doubtless based on some sort of foundation, but they were not the true ones, to which he merely hinted in a superficial way. He complained that he had been asked to alter two female figures, which he was willing to finish within the month, but as to going to Ferrara he could not undertake the journey because he had more conveniences of models

* For the facts in the text, see Campori's Tiziano e gli Estensi, pp. 13—16.

male and female, at Venice than elsewhere; and besides he was conscious of not having neglected his patron in any way, having divided his day between the Duke and the Signoria, painting for the latter at the Hall of Great Council in the morning, for the former at home in the evening. The truth was that after Titian had finished the portrait of the Doge Grimani, some persons had called the prince's attention to the larger and more important duties for which the master was responsible, and it had been discovered that Titian had not done any work in the Doge's Palace for years. This neglect had been made a subject of fresh remonstrance by the Council of Ten, and a resolution had been passed on the 11th of August, 1522, calling on the painter to complete the canvas "fourth from the door in the Hall of Great Council," before the 30th of the following June, under pain of losing the broker's patent and all the advances made by the Salt Office. A messenger of the Council had been sent to Titian's house with a copy of this resolution, and had delivered it into his own hands, and Titian was bound under the circumstances to obey. We saw he then painted either a portion of the battle of Cadore, or the canvas at the opposite side of the Hall, of which the subject was given in a previous chapter; but it is altogether uncertain whether the wholesome dread of authority which kept him to his easel in October was in any way lasting, for in the margin of the resolution of Aug. 11th, and under date July 20, 1523, we find an entry stating that Titian was then only doing the

work required of him; and it is clear that the authorities were not inclined to hold to the wording of their sentence, but glad that the painter should have been induced under any circumstances to devote some hours to them.*

On the 5th of December, 1522, Titian again expressed his intention to visit Ferrara, and there is some allusion in the letters of Tebaldi to his master, to a figure of a lady which Titian had finished and might be induced to take with him. It was not, however, till January 1523, that the artist found his way to the banks of the Po, and certain items in the Ferrarese accounts enable us to trace his movements accurately.

Item. January 30, to a "navicellaio" for carriage of a picture from Venice to Ferrara, sent by Maestro Titiano to H. Illust. Highness.

Item to a "*facchino*" to carry the same on his shoulders from Francolino to Ferrara.

Item, to a carter who carried from Francolino to Ferrara the *forziere* (trunk) of "Maestro Tutiano."

Travellers or parcels, it would seem, were shipped in Titian's time in barges which sailed to the mouths of the Po. From the estuary upwards there were towing paths, along which the barges were drawn by horses.† Francolino on the right bank was the port of Ferrara.

Payments entered in the Ferrarese accounts of this

* The records are in Lorenzi, *u. s.*, p. 175.

† B. Cellini's Autobiography, Bianchi's ed., 8vo, Firenze, 1852, p. 167.



BACCHUS AND ARIADNE.

In the National Gallery.

[*To face p.* 259, *Vol. I.*

time show that the host of the Castello inn at Ferrara was then boarding Titian's servants. His charge on the 7th of February is for twenty-four meals furnished to these menials, from which we might gather that the painter was at the time on a visit to the Duke; but it is more likely that Titian sent his baggage and assistants up the Po, whilst his own itinerary led him to Mantua. For at Mantua he was the guest of Federico Gonzaga till the 3rd of February; and from thence he proceeded to the court of the Estes, to which he took letters from the Marquis.*

Here, we can have no doubt, Titian finished and exhibited the last of his "bacchanals," the "Bacchus and Ariadne" of the National Gallery. Here we may think he completed the picture which goes by the name of "Alfonso and Laura Dianti;" here, too, we should fancy, one of those representations of Venus, of which we still possess a wreck in the Museum of Darmstadt.

Like the "Venus Worship," the subject of which is taken from Philostratus, the "Bacchus and Ariadne" is derived from one of the classic poets; and Ridolfi has already pointed to Catullus as the source from which Titian's inspiration was derived. Modern writers have exercised their ingenuity in the attempt to show that Titian was a poet, but they fail to prove that he was acquainted with the Latin tongue. Yet Titian certainly possessed an edition of Catullus, which was preserved for centuries, and bore an inscription in Titian's hand, "Liber mihi Titiani

* See *postea*, and compare Campori, Tiziano e gli Estensi, pp. 16, 17.

et amicorum cæterorumque."* His picture of Ariadne is a faithful transcript of the poem. Ariadne, near the shore of Naxos, turns her back to the spectator, her lawn tunic loosely enwrapped in an azure peplum, round which a red scarf is gracefully entwined, her limbs and feet and shoulders bare. Suddenly she raises her head and throws up one arm; she clutches her dress and presses her step, as she thinks to flee the presence of Bacchus, whose chariot drawn by leopards stops on the sward. Bacchus himself, mad with eagerness, leaps from his car, followed by Menads and Satyrs:

> "At parte ex aliâ florens volitabat Iacchus,
> Cum thiaso Satyrorum, et Nysigenis Silenis,
> Te quærens, Ariadna, tuoque incensus amore."†

A young faun gaily marches near the wheel of the God's chariot, trailing after him the head of the steer and smiling at the bark of a dog. Behind him a satyr entwines himself with serpents, another girdled with vine carries the steer's leg and a thyrsus, and a third bears a vase on his shoulders:

> "Horum pars tecta quatiebant cuspide thyrsos;
> Pars e divolso jactabant membra juvenco;
> Pars sese tortis serpentibus incingebant."‡

In rear of these again two Menads with tambourine and cymbals, and a Satyr blowing a horn:

* Ridolfi, Marav. i. 205; Lomazzo, Trattato, 4to, Milan, 1585, p. 393; Morelli's MS. notes to Tizianello's Anonimo. Titian's Catullus was Alexander Guarini's edition of 1521.

† Catulli Carminum, Liber LXIV. Epith. Pel. et Thetidos, vv. 252–4.

‡ Ibid. vv. 257–9.

"Plangebant aliæ proceris tympana palmis,
Aut tereti tenues tinnitus ære ciebant,
Multi raucisonos efflabant cornua bombos." *

And away under the trees Silenus sits helpless, supported on an ass. The boisterous procession issues out of a grove forming the right half of the picture, whilst between Bacchus and Ariadne to the left a grand reach of shore is seen, a steep promontory with a town on its summit, bathes its sides in the deep blue of the Ægean, on which the galley of Theseus is sailing away, and high up above Ariadne's head, in a sky bespangled with silver clouds, the crown of stars is shining:

"Ex Ariadneis aurea temporibus
Fixa corona . . ." †

This is one of the pictures which once seen can never be forgotten, and it is telling for the vivid nature of the impression which it made on Vasari that it quite effaced the memory of Bellini's Bacchanal, so that when called upon to describe the panel at Alnwick he involuntarily described that of the National Gallery.‡ The study of the classic, which carried the master beyond the limits of the possible in the "St. Sebastian" at Brescia, is made conducive here to a new perfection, and we now observe that something of the spirit of the antique permeates the frame of an artist who only cares at times to remind us of its outward aspect. We can no more deny that the

* Catulli Carminum, Liber LXIV. Epith. Pel. et Thetidos, vv. 262–4.

† Catulli Carm., Lib. LXVI. Coma Berenices, vv. 60–1.

‡ Vasari, xiii. 23.

Bacchus is an ideal of the Greek time—with flesh and blood to indicate that he lives—than that Ariadne is an inspired type of the classic age, as full of grace as it is possible for any artist to compass. Centuries have robbed the canvas of its freshness, and restorers have done their best to remove its brightest surfaces; yet no one who looks at it even now can fail to acknowledge the magic of its enchantment. Rich harmony of drapery tints and soft modelling, depth of shade and warm flesh—all combine to produce a highly coloured glow; yet in the midst of this glow the form of Ariadne seems incomparably fair. Nature was never reproduced more kindly or with greater exuberance than it is in every part of this picture. What subtlety there is in the concentration of light on Ariadne, which alone gives a focus to the composition! What splendour in the contrasts of colour—what wealth and diversity of scale in air and vegetation; how infinite is the space—how varied yet mellow the gradations of light and shade! There is not a single composition by Titian up to this time in which the scene and the dramatis personæ are more completely in unison; and, looking at these groves and cliffs and seas, or prying into the rich vegetation of the foreground, we are startled beyond measure to think that they were worked out piecemeal, that the figures were put in first and the landscape last. Nor is it without curiosity that we inquire where Titian got that landscape, where he studied that foreground; and we are forced to conclude that he forsook the workshop on the Grand Canal, where there certainly was no

vegetation, even in the sixteenth century, and went to Ferrara, and there reproduced with "botanical fidelity" the iris, the wild rose and columbine which so exquisitely adorn the very edge of the ground on which the Satyrs tread.* But more surprising than all, Titian out of this dream of Catullus produces a picture which we find no difficulty in accepting as an absolute reality. In the warm air of Naxos it seems natural that leopards should be gentle beasts of draught. In the horns and hairy legs of a youthful faun we discover nothing that is monstrous, and that snakes should harmlessly twine round the legs and arms of Satyrs appears to be no miracle. Here, too, drunkenness ceases to be repulsive, and nymphs are beings of true flesh and blood, whose place in the creation it is to dance in undress through the groves, and clash the cymbal or shake the tambourine. It is in this power to transform a scene, the elements of which are altogether fanciful, into something that strikes us as reality, that we acknowledge Titian's genius to consist. Far beyond any of his contemporaries, he possessed the art of giving to his figures that impetuous movement which is the result of instant volition. The headlong progress of the bacchic troop, the dancing gait of the infant faun, the step of the nymph throwing up the cymbal, the writhing of the satyrs, are all displays of motion, though perhaps of motion not as instant as Titian realizes when he makes the vine-crowned Bacchus with his fluttering

* See the preface to the second edition of Ruskin's Modern Painters, p. xxviii.

drapery spring madly from his car, and Ariadne precipitate her step towards the shore. Cause, effect, and the rapid reactions of both, are all represented or suggested with the concomitant charm of graceful motion in forms of præternatural beauty as to shape and colour.*

So long as the Estes owned Ferrara they clung with natural fondness to the treasures of Alfonso's Camerino; their indolence or want of dexterity allowed the legate, Cardinal Aldobrandini, in 1598 to remove them. Clement the Eighth, it will be remembered, had successfully vindicated the claim of the Church to Ferrara. Cesar, Duke of Modena, had surrendered the state on condition of keeping his property and movables; but the legate secretly removed the pictures from the Castello, and refused afterwards to give them up. At Rome Varottari made the tasteful copies which are now preserved in the gallery of Bergamo.† The "Worship of Venus" and the "Bacchanal" were transferred to the Ludovisi Palace, where they remained till the Cardinal

* This beautiful picture, on canvas, 5 ft. 9 in. high, by 6 ft. 3 in. wide, has been etched (reversed) by Gio. Andrea Podesta of Genoa, at Rome, in 1636; and by J. Juster in 1691; and engraved in Jones' National Gallery. It was in the Barberini and Aldobrandini collections at Rome, and was purchased from the latter for Mr. Buchanan in 1806. In 1826 it was bought of Mr. Hamlet for the National Gallery (No. 35). On the vase to the left "TICIANUS F." See Ridolfi, Marav. i. 257, and Scanelli's Microcosmo, p. 220.

† See Campori, Tiziano e gli Estensi, p. 28; and Frizzi's Memorie per la Storia di Ferrara. Varottari's copies are so faithful that he imitates even the signatures. Compare also Boschini (Navegar, p. 173), who says Varottari made his copies at Rome. They were for a time heirlooms in the house of the Varottari at Venice.

of that name sent them to Count Monterey, the Spanish viceroy at Naples, as a present for the King of Spain.* In July, 1638, Sir Arthur Hopton, British envoy at Madrid, thought it worth while to address a despatch to Lord Cottington, telling him that Monterey in person had brought the "Bacanalian of Titian" to the King.† The "Bacchus and Ariadne" remained at Rome much longer than its companions, and passed through several collections before it was taken to England in 1806. Rubens "translated into Flemish" the "Worship of Venus" and the "Bacchanal," and both his canvases were part of the spoil of Bernadotte, who took them from Madrid to Sweden.‡ Two copies of the "Bacchus and Ariadne" were made by Poussin; and artists of a later time followed each other in transposing to canvas a part or the whole of these celebrated masterpieces.§

* Boschini, Navegar Pitt°, pp. 169, and ff°.

† Hopton to Cottington, Madrid, $\frac{\text{July 26}}{\text{August 5}}$, 1638, in Sainsbury's original unpublished papers, illustrative of the Life of Sir P. P. Rubens, 8vo, London, 1859, p. 353.

‡ These copies are now in the Hall of the Court of Justice in the royal palace of Stockholm. They were registered in the inventory of Rubens, after his death, 1640, as follows: "A piece of Venus, w^th^ many Cupidds, taken out of Philostratus"—"A piece of Bacchanalls, with sheppards and sheepherdesses dancinge and drunck; out of Philostratus, upon cloth" (Sainsbury Papers, *u. s.*, p. 238).

§ One of these copies by Poussin is at Alnwick Castle, another in the gallery of the Academy of San Luca at Rome. The copy of the Bacchanal at Madrid, in the Guicciardini Palace at Florence, is modern, and looks like the work of Sebastiano Ricci, or Andrea Celesti. Another copy, of smaller size, and of northern impress, is in the Scarpa collection at La Motta in Friuli. A fragment—the dancing satyr with the leg of the steer, the satyr with the serpents, the Menad playing cymbals, and the infant faun—is No. 110, under Titian's name, at the Pitti Palace in Florence. It is a feeble copy by a late disciple of the school of

Historians are not agreed as to whether Laura Dianti, whose likeness Titian painted, was the wife or the mistress of Alfonso of Este;* yet a record exists which seems to prove that Tomaso and Agostino Mosti, both well known writers at Ferrara, confessed to have been present at the Duke's marriage.† In her life time Laura was known as "the most illustrious Signora Laura Eustochio Estense;" and when she died and was buried in Sant' Agostino of Ferrara, Alfonso the Second and Cardinal Luigi of Este accompanied her son Don Alfonso to the funeral.‡ Vasari tells us it was "a stupendous portrait" that Titian painted of the Signora Laura "who was afterwards the Duke's wife."§ It has not been suggested, though it may be, that this masterpiece was the "portrait of a lady with an Ethiopian page" noticed in earlier pages in connection with Lucretia Borgia. The fashion of late years has been to identify Laura d'Este with the picture of a girl at her toilet attended by a man holding two mirrors, in the Louvre. In confirmation of this it has been said that the man in the background is Alfonso of Este, and there is no doubt that the round forehead with the cropped hair in a peak down its centre, the short and finely chiselled nose, and the cut beard, are very like similar features in

Bologna. Albano copied and adapted the "Triumph of Bacchus" and the "Worship of Venus," adding figures of his own to both compositions. His canvases are catalogued in the collection of Queen Christine (compare Campori, Raccolta de' Cataloghi, p. 345).

* See Muratori and Gregorovius, Lucrezia Borgia, *u. s.*, p. 325.

† Notizie relative a Ferrara da L. N. Citadella, 8vo, Fer., 1864, pp. 170–1.

‡ Ibid. The burial took place June 28, 1573.

§ Vasari, xiii. p. 25.

Alfonso's portrait at Madrid;* yet this much, if accepted as correct, would not prove beyond question that the lady to whom Alfonso is holding the mirrors is Laura Dianti; and we may fairly doubt whether a girl, beautiful indeed but simple in attire, could be the mistress of a duke like Alfonso. It is known, however, that Laura was the daughter of a citizen of modest station, and it may be that Titian was called on to portray this citizen's daughter when as yet she had not risen from the humbleness of her original position. It is certainly striking that the shape which Titian has painted should not only be beautiful, but of extreme simplicity in its attire, added to which a generous breadth of form, ruddy health and firm flesh, indicate a nature altogether foreign to the air of courts. It is true this innocent-looking maid has already learnt the arts familiar to ladies of that age. Her hair has been washed, plaited, and bleached to a ruddy tone by lotions and exposure to the sun, and has thus acquired that artificial golden tinge which we look for in vain in the Venice of our day; the wave is in it which plaiting gives, and an ointment is ready on the table to smooth and perfume it. But these innocent arts might be known to the daughter of a citizen as well as to the mate of a prince;† and there is nothing in them to diminish the impression of simplicity which the picture otherwise conveys.

* Compare Ticozzi, *u. s.*, p. 58.

† See Cesaro Vecellio, Degli habiti Antichi, &c., Ven. 1590, p. 145, where there is a drawing of a woman with her hair exposed to the sun outside of a large straw hat. A description is appended of the way to make hair auburn.

The girl is represented standing behind a table or slab of stone dressing her hair, whilst a man in the gloom behind her holds with his left hand a round mirror, the reflection of which he catches with a square mirror in his right. Into the second of these the girl gently bends her head to look, eagerly watched by her lover as she twists a long skein of wavy golden hair. Over the white and finely plaited linen that loosely covers her bosom, a short green bodice is carelessly thrown; and a skirt of the same stuff is gathered to the waist by a sash of similar colour. A broad white sleeve hangs in a rich festoon from the right shoulder, exposing the whole of a grand and fleshy arm; whilst a bright blue scarf winds round the left wrist and leaves nothing but the hand to be seen as it rests on the ointment vase. The left side of the girl's head is already dressed, she is finishing the right side, and a delightful archness and simplicity beams in the eyes as they turn to catch the semblance in the mirror. The coal-black eye and brow contrast with the ruddy hair; the chiselled nose projects in delicate line from a face of rounded yet pure contour, and the lips, of a cherry redness which Titian alone makes natural, are cut with surprising fineness. The light is concentrated with unusual force upon the face and bust of the girl, whilst the form and features of the man are lost in darkness. We pass with surprising rapidity from the most delicate silvery gradations of sunlit flesh and drapery, to the mysterious depths of an almost unfathomable gloom, and we stand before a modelled balance of

light and shade that recalls da Vinci, entranced by a chord of tonic harmony as sweet and as thrilling as was ever struck by any artist of the Venetian school.* How this depth of shade and flimmering of reflections in darkness, how this breadth of light were attained, is a secret which defies us the more as it defied the closest observers of Titian's own time. How he worked the strong *pasta* of his pigments or modified them with countless varieties of rubbings, subject to a final general glazing, it is hard to say; but he had now succeeded in producing that combination of colour and fairness which we notice in all the pictures of this time,—a combination equally conspicuous in the "Bacchus and Ariadne," the "Madonna with the Rabbit," and those grander but later marvels of

* The earliest reference to this picture is in Bathoe's catalogue of Charles I.'s collection: "No. 16, Titian and his mistress, by himself, appraised at and sold for £100." Jabach bought it, and afterwards sold it to Louis XIV. It is now No. 471 in the Louvre, on canvas, m. 0.96 h. by 0.76. If there be anything in the picture less commendable than the rest, it is the rendering of the right arm, which, together with the drapery about it, seems not quite to fit to the shoulder, but this defect is scarcely visible in the midst of the beauties which abound in every part. A fine contrast is that of the red damask dress of the man with the cold dark background. A replica, seen by Ticozzi in the house of Count Leopold Cicognara, was sold to "Milord Stuart" in 1816 (Ticozzi, Vecelli, p. 59). Doubts arose as to its genuineness, and it was sent to the Academy at Rome, which certified that "it might be a Giorgione, but could not be a Titian," upon which "Lord Stuart" claimed repayment of his money (Cicogna, MS. Notes to Morelli, *u. s.*). A replica, perhaps the same as the above, is registered under the name of Pordenone in the catalogue of Queen Christine's collection (Campori, Raccolta de' Cataloghi, p. 359). The Louvre picture was engraved by Forster and H. Dancken, in Filhol and Landon's works. A fine photograph by the Photographic Society.

technical execution, the "Entombment" of the Louvre and the "Virgin and Saints" of the Vatican. Traditions of an early time did not, as we saw, connect this picture with Alfonso of Ferrara; on the contrary, when it passed into the collection of Charles the First of England, it was known as "Titian and his Mistress;" and strange to say, though a likeness is not to be traced between the man in the background and Titian, the name still clings, as names will strangely do, to the canvas which displays, if not his figure, at least his art in its grandest form. What distinguishes the canvas at the Louvre from others in which Titian has depicted with a certain freedom the charms of women, is the semblance of chasteness and candour in the persons whom he delineated. When he chose he could easily create a more complex impression; as he does in the "Flora" of the Uffizi, a figure which presents form of similar scantling with a mould of head and movement not essentially different. But here instead of vivid colour and powerful effect of light and shade, we have all light, all softness, and a suffusion which is not without dazzling brightness though it is without strong contrasts. Here in fact Titian evidently desires to suggest another phase of life—not the maiden, but the woman—with the roses which she has plucked, the woman whose skin is fair but blanched by art, whose shape is softened by seclusion, a woman of delicate whiteness, seductive and lightly clad. Tradition again suggests Titian's mistress; and Sandrart embodied this tradition when he wrote in the seventeenth century:

"Vere viret tellus placido perfusa liquore
A Zephyro et blando turgida flore viget
Flora modo veris, Titiani pectus amore
Implet, et huic similes illaqueare parat." *

But what did Sandrart know of Titian's private life, what cause had he to lower the "Flora" to the rank of a Phryne, or was she certainly one of those ladies of light fame who survived to be copied by Rubens under the name of a courtezan?† The lover of art may now say it is a matter of very little consequence. The "Flora," if nothing more, is a lovely ideal which ranges far above the realms to which her earthly lot would seem to bind her. There is nothing in this ethereal Flora to shock the sensitive eye. She is not yet dressed, but her hair is looped up with a silken cord so as to shape the most charming puffs above the ears, falling in short and plaited waves to the bosom, leaving bare the whole of the face, the neck, and throat. No one here holds the mirrors, yet the head is bent and the eyes are turned as if some one stood by to catch the glance, and stretch a hand for the flowers; for whilst with her left Flora strives by an intricate and momentary play of the fingers, to keep fast the muslin that falls from her shoulder, and the damask that slips from her form, with the other she presents a handful of roses, jessamines, and violets, to an unseen lover. Sensual no doubt is the air and movement of this syren; yet to this sensualism

* This is a copy of verses beneath Sandrart's print of the "Flora."

† In Rubens' inventory of 1640, we find an entry of "fower pictures of Venetian courtesans," after Titian. See Sainsbury Papers illustrative of Sir P. P. Rubens, p. 238.

Titian has added proportions and features of surprising loveliness, reminding us in their purity of some of the choicest antiques; and there is so much resemblance of movement and type between her and the girl with the mirrors, that we are tempted to think that the first is in some way the sequel and development of the second till we remember that the same mould of face is characteristic of "artless love" and the Menads of the Madrid "Bacchanal;" and we recollect that the art displayed in the "Flora" is of an earlier phase which still reveals the influence of Palma. The clear light scale in the "Flora" shows a masterly adaptation of the system effectively tried in the "Three Ages;" appropriate to which is the thin disposal of pigments, the broad plane of tinting, and the delicate shade of all but imperceptible half-tones. The white dress, though muslin-fine and gathered into minute folds, is beyond measure graceful in fall, and contrasts in texture as well as harmonizes in colour with the stiffer and more cornered stuff of the rose-tinged cloth which shows such fine damask reflexes on the left arm.*

* This picture, No. 626 at the Uffizi, was first exhibited at Florence in 1793, when it was taken out of the Duke's "Garda-roba" (see Uffizi Catalogue of 1869). Its history is obscure; we only know that it was engraved (in reverse) in the 17th century by Sandrart, when in possession of Don Alphonzo Lopez, the Spanish Grand at Amsterdam, who also owned the "Ariosto" of Cobham Hall. The same picture, or a copy of it—we cannot now tell which—belonged at one time to the national collection in Vienna, and is engraved under the name of Palma Vecchio, in A. J. Prenner's Theatrum Artis Pictoriæ, of 1728. The canvas at the Uffizi, with its life-size figure seen to the hip, on a light cool ground, is ill preserved. The left breast and other parts, more or less, are disfigured by repainting; and the flesh generally

The delineation of nude forms *per se*, and particularly of nude female forms, was not a thing from which the taste of the Venetian public recoiled; it was rather the natural consequence of a spreading acquaintance with the Latin poets which characterized the period, a growing interest in the models of antiquity, which when they were not to be had as originals, were usually sought for in casts; and last, not least, the gay morality of the Venetian community at large. Tebaldi, who so closely watched Titian that there was not a canvas in his workshop with which he was not familiar, asked the painter in 1523 if he would take with him to Ferrara a certain female figure which he had recently executed. Titian replied that he meant not to do so unless the Duke expressly showed a desire to see it.* From such casual and scattered allusions as that, we might alone surmise that pictures representing women were not necessarily portraits, or at least, not portraits of individuals dear in any sense to those who bought them, and it might be that in this way subjects like the "Flora," or the "Venus" of Darmstadt, might pass into the hands of a Duke of Ferrara or a Marquis of Mantua. Besides these princes there were men enough at Venice whose wealth allowed them to indulge a taste of this kind, but they were doubtless few, and it should be possible, one might think, to point out every person for whom such pieces were executed, and yet the "Venus" of

is cold from abrasion, unequal removal of delicate glazings, and consequent loss of harmony. There is a good photograph (from an engraving) by Braun of Dornach.

* Campori, Tiziano e gli Estensi, p. 16.

Darmstadt and its numerous replicas are a proof of the contrary; we know as little of its original purchaser as of the first owner of the "Venus of the Shell," the "Venus" of Madrid, or the "Venus" of Pardo; and all that the tests at our command enable us to affirm is that the "Venus" of Darmstadt and the "Venus" of Lord Ellesmere must have been painted at the time of which we are now treating. As to the former, it may be objected that the beauties peculiar to Titian's pictures are no longer visible, since the harmony of colour and the charms of a technical execution always admirable, have passed away under immoderate repaints. Enough however remains to warrant the opinion that Titian in this canvas completed a model of which it was open to himself, his disciples and copyists, to make innumerable imitations. He painted a young woman on cushions, naked, and asleep, a red cloth on which she lies partly covering the ground and partly hanging from a neighbouring oak. She sleeps with one arm under her head like the "Venus" of Pardo, in a landscape of which the counterpart is to be found in the "Noli me tangere" of the National Gallery; the roses strewed on her couch fading in the tepid air, whilst a couple are seated courting in the distance. There is nothing to be said of the figure in its present state except that it is a reproduction of a nature perfect in shape, young and most graceful in line. The copies which were made of it show the surprising popularity of the subject, and it is curious to observe that most of these copies found their way to England, one being in the mansion of the Duke of Wellington

in London, another in Dudley House, a third in the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge, whilst varieties with Amor at the feet of Venus pricking her hand with a dart,* are to be found at Dulwich and Dresden.† Last, not least, the "Venus of the Shell," which now adorns the Ellesmere collection, seems the

* This subject, ascribed to Titian, was in the gallery of Queen Christine. (See the Catalogue in Campori's Raccolta, *u. s.*, pp. 340—1).

† The Darmstadt Venus, No. 520 in the Grand Ducal Museum of Darmstadt, — on canvas, m. 1.30 h. by 1.66 br.—is so injured, that the catalogue does not venture to assign it to Titian, and yet there are parts in it, independent of the lines and landscape, which are most graceful, that display the hand of Titian, *ex. gr.*, a portion of the bosom, and particularly the right breast, and that portion of the background which comprises a road winding down from a hill covered with farm-buildings. The rest of the picture is irretrievably damaged, particularly the head, which is grey, and the hand, which is deformed, the red couch, the landscape and sky. Of the copies and replicas of this picture, the following notes may be of interest:

London. Duke of Wellington, Apsley House. Replica of the above under Titian's name, by a Venetian of Titian's School,—on canvas.

London. Dudley House. Canvas copy of smaller size than the foregoing, ascribed to Titian. In the foreground to the left a little dog; a picture of the Bolognese School.

Cambridge. Fitzwilliam Museum, No. 38. Copy of the Darmstadt Venus, with the dog in addition. A canvas ascribed to Padovanino, and quite in his style.

Dulwich Gallery. The same Venus as above on a white cloth in front of a red curtain, in a court enclosed to the left by a terrace-balustrade, beyond which a landscape is seen. A winged Cupid pricks the hand of Venus with a dart. Here the hand is not that of Titian, but of a disciple of the Schools of Bassano and Tintoretto.

Dresden Gallery, No. 236. Canvas, 3 ft. 9½ by 6 ft. 1½. The Venus as before, but lying on a white sheet before a red curtain in a landscape. The Cupid was so injured that it was painted over. This specimen is assigned dubiously to Sassoferrato.

The same picture, with varieties in the landscape, and a different position of the Venus in the landscape, formed part of the Tassis Collection at Venice in the seventeenth century, and was engraved in 1682 by Lefèbre.

final effort of this period to combine the form of the antique with the realism of the moderns. There was indeed the less reason for neglecting the lessons of classic art in this instance, as the subject was one which did not involve any afterthought, and it was not necessary to immortalize any of those frail ladies who held Venetian patricians enthralled. Venus Anadyomene rising—new-born but full grown—from the sea, and wringing her hair, might have suggested one of those ideals which were conceived in past ages by the genius of Phidias and Apelles. But Titian, even with this theme to work upon, could not imagine anything sufficiently elevated to compare with the antique, and he produced at best one of those creations which recall Greek art in its externals without impressing us with a sublime purity. Venus is seen standing in the sea, undraped,—a shell floating on the ripples of the water which covers her knees. Her right arm is raised to hold the long hair of which she combs the tresses with her left, and her face is turned full towards the spectator, at whom she looks with a piercing glance that seems to shoot irresistibly from the round of an eye-ball hardly concealed in any part by its long silken lash. The grace of the movement is true but alluring, the face a perfect oval, but both belong to a being more conscious than innocent. There is more fulness and more exuberance of flesh in this than in earlier representations of a similar kind by Titian; but there is also more subtlety in rendering modulations, more delicacy in varying gradations, a broader touch, and more substantial impast. Yet



VENUS ANADYOMENE

BRIDGWATER GALLERY.

[*To face p.* 276, *Vol. I.*

Titian never gave more perfect rounding with so little shadow; the whole shape contrasts in silver grey with the brighter hues of the hair, the water, and the sky, and the features are those of a new model which takes the place of the "Violante" and "Flora," and serves to represent alternately the Goddess of Love, and the Magdalen of Scripture. Pliny tells us that when Augustus took the "Venus Anadyomene" of Apelles to the temple of Cæsar, it was injured and submitted for repair to the painters of Rome, not one of whom was found able to restore it. Attempts have been made at various periods to give its original lustre to the "Venus" of Titian, but the result has been to damage and not to improve, and some of the delicacies of the modelling have been carried off ruthlessly by the sponge of the cleaner.*

* The "Venus Anadyomene," now No. 19 in the Ellesmere Collection, is on canvas, the figure under life size. From the collection of Queen Christine, where we first find it (Campori, Raccolta, *u. s.*, 341), it passed into the Orleans Collection, and was sold in 1800 for £800 to the Duke of Bridgewater. (Compare Waagen, Treasures, ii. 31 and 497). The figure is turned to the left, the face to the right.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Gonzagas.—Their first acquaintance with Titian.—Titian at Mantua, and his first picture for the Marquess Federico.—The Entombment.—Portraits of Jacopo Soranzo and A. Capello.—Madonna of San Niccolò de' Frari.—Accession of Doge Gritti; fresco of St. Christopher.—Titian and Paris Bordone.—The Baptism of Christ.—Frescos in the Doge's Chapel at Venice.—Portraits of Gritti.—Titian and Sansovino.—Journey to Ferrara.—Tommaso Mosti.—Promotion of Titian's father.—Annunciation at San Rocco.—Madonna di Casa Pesaro.—Influence of Titian on Paolo Veronese.

In 1523 the circle of Titian's practice was enlarged; and the Marquess of Mantua was added to the list of his patrons. Such an addition at such a moment might be considered natural when we remember that Federico Gonzaga the Second was the son of Isabella d' Este, and nephew to Titian's staunchest ally Alfonso of Ferrara. Many years before this period, when Federico was but a child, Titian witnessed a dramatic episode in which the fortunes of the Gonzagas were deeply involved. The war of the League of Cambrai had broken out and Francesco Marquess of Mantua, captive to a band of Stradiots near Verona, was sent by Andrea Gritti to the capital, where he was lodged in the palace of St. Mark.* Special preparations had been made to

* August 10, 1509. He was imprisoned in that part of the palace called "le Torreselle." Sanuto, Diario IX., in Cicogna, Iscr. Ven., vi. 244.

give strength to certain apartments in the palace, and one of the most interesting records of the time is Pietro Lombardo's account for securing the rooms in which the distinguished captive was confined.* After his release Francesco shewed that wonderful capacity to trim which struck the historian Mario Equicola, who was able to boast that in the space of nine years, from 1510 to 1519, the Mantuan territory was never visited by a hostile force nor disgraced by the uninvited presence of a foreign flag.† But twice in the lapse of those years the powers jealous of Ferrara and Mantua tried to seize the person of Francesco's heir, that they might have a hostage for the good conduct of the Mantuan ruler. In each instance the Venetian republic and Julius the Second were foiled, but Federico as a boy felt the perils of his position, and cultivated the arts of intrigue by which these perils might be averted. When at the age of eighteen he inherited his father's estate he too had learnt to trim, and we see him, though a declared friend of France at his accession, seeking investiture from Charles the Fifth as suzerain, and acquiring the good graces of the republic, his nearest and most dangerous neighbour. It was probably during a visit to Venice in January and February 1520, that Federico first made acquaintance with the works if not with the person of Titian. During his stay there he was initiated in all the mysteries of the Venetian Carnival, and solemnly elected a

* Lorenzi, *u. s.*, p. 150.
† Mario Equicola, Dell' Istoria di Mantova, 8vo, Mant., 2nd ed. of 1610, p. 267.

member of the company of the Calza.* To this company or club it was usual that princes should be invited. Its members were the flower of the Venetian patriciate, who subscribed money and spent it on comedies and shows. They were licensed to transgress the sumptuary laws of the republic and wear the particoloured dress which Titian, at an early period of his career, depicted on the walls of the Fondaco.† As a member of this gay society, Federico Gonzaga might in 1520 have made the personal acquaintance of the painter with whom his uncle's envoy Tebaldi was intimate; but the Marquess was probably too young at the time to think much of art, and though he probably saw the master's works, he failed to notice the master himself. It was not till 1523 that his attention was really called to Titian, but then he took the most active means to attract him to his court, and the success of his endeavours is proved by the following letter.

GIAMBATTISTA MALATESTA TO THE MARQUIS FEDERICO GONZAGA.

"The bearer of these presents is Maestro Ticiano, most excellent in art, but modest and gentle withal. He leaves many works of importance in suspense to go and kiss the hand of your Excellency, who deigned to ask me to seek him out. I therefore refrain from saying more in his favour.

"From VENICE, *the 25th of January*, 1523."‡

* See Marin Sanuto in Cicogna, Iscr. Venet. vi., 268.

† Sansovino, Ven. desc., p. 406.

‡ The original is in Appendix.

We may assume that Titian soon satisfied his new patron of his skill, for Federico from this time till his death, treated the painter with great distinction; and we find him despatching Titian from Mantua to Ferrara with the following letter:

FEDERICO GONZAGA TO ALFONSO D'ESTE.

"Most Illustrious and best Lord Uncle,—Having asked Titian, the bearer of these presents, to execute certain work for me, he declared himself unable to serve me at present, because of a promise to do certain things for your Excellency which require time. For this reason I send him to attend your Excellency. But I beg he may be sent back at once to expedite the work I have on hand for him, which will take but a few days. As soon as he shall have done he can return to the service of your Excellency, and in this your Excellency will do mé a singular pleasure to whom I stand greatly recommended.

"Servus et Nepos

"FEDERICUS MARCHIO. MANTUÆ.

"S.R.E. Capit. gnalis.

"MANTUA, *3rd February*, 1523."

The work to which Titian was thus pressingly invited was a portrait, to obtain which Federico spared neither flattery nor presents;† and the following letter from Braghino Croce of Correggio, a chamber-

* Translated from the original in Campori, Tiziano e gli Estensi, p. 17.

† No clue is given here as to the person portrayed. Federico's own likeness, we shall see, he ordered later.

lain and special envoy of the Marquess at Venice, tells how he strove to gratify the painter.

BRAGHINO TO THE MARQUIS FEDERICO GONZAGA.

"I gave the doublet to Mro. Tuciano in the presence of several high personages, and he is very grateful. He thinks of nothing but your Excellency's service, to which he will readily devote even his life blood, and he kisses many times your Excellency's hand. As to the portrait, which is very fine, he says he shall try to give it a handsome framing and then send it home.

"From VENICE, *the 11th of August*, 1523."

The two agents of the Marquis quarrelled, it would seem, for the favour of sending the picture to Mantua, but Malatesta was the fortunate one, whose zeal was rewarded with the following laconic note:

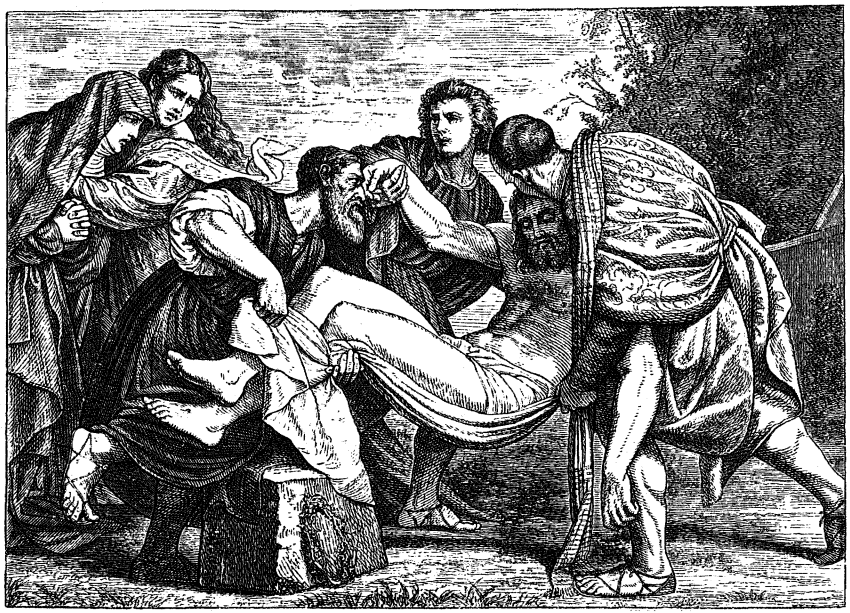
FEDERICO GONZAGA TO GIAMBATTISTA MALATESTA, AT VENICE.

"We have received the picture sent by Maestro Tutiano, which pleased us very much.

"From MANTUA, *the 15th of August*, 1523." *

We may ascribe to a period subsequent to this correspondence one of the finest performances that issued from Titian's hands before he finally lost the impress of Palmesque art; and this is the "Entomb-

* For the originals of the above, and a letter written by Braghino on the 14th of August, 1523, see the Appendix.



THE ENTOMBMENT. LOUVRE.

[*To face p.* 283, *Vol. I.*

ment," which passed in the seventeenth century, from the Palace of the Gonzagas into the collection of Charles the First, and which since the days of Louis the Fourteenth has been an ornament of the French State Gallery.

The "Entombment," though incomparably below Raphael's version of the same theme in respect of balanced distribution and complexity of line, is still for Titian a representative piece. It would be true to say that none of the figures perform all that they seem to promise, and that there is more of symbolism than of absolute reality in the action of every one of them; and yet the impression produced by the picture as a whole is probably much greater than that which we receive on looking at the Borghese altar-piece; and this arises no doubt from a surprising variety in type and expression, a subtle display of light surfaces upon a ground studded with diverse shades of gloom, and a richness of colouring which throws over the whole canvas a mysterious weirdness. Two men bending over the corpse of the Redeemer are supposed to bear the awful weight of His frame; St. John Evangelist behind merely holds up the arm; but these three figures alone form the pyramid of the composition, and the group of the Virgin and Magdalen on the left is but a splendid bit of *fioritura*. The body of Christ is suspended in a cloth, one corner of which is held at the hip by Nicodemus, the other tightly grasped at the knee by Joseph of Arimathea. Nicodemus, in a blood-red tunic of complex texture, with a green lining and brown sleeves, shows his

back to the spectator as he strides and bends to his load, whilst Joseph, in a deep-green coat and his shirt sleeve rolled up, kneels with one leg on a stone and sways the body in the direction of the tomb. The Evangelist in rear between both, follows their movement and looks up as he raises the Saviour's wrist. To the left the Virgin, in a blue mantle, wrings her hands and partly rests on the supporting arm of the Magdalen, whose yellow dress and loosened hair flutter in the breeze. Taken singly, each of these figures is moving in a quick momentary way. The form of Christ is perfectly symmetrical, of great strength and preternatural size, the head majestically enframed in flowing locks and copious beard, the limbs and feet beautifully moulded and admirably drawn, the whole shape, if not ideal and "godlike," still a wonderfully supple and choice representation of select nature. The bearers finely display the raw muscle of strength in movement that looks spontaneous and true, whilst the action is cleverly promoted by earnest and telling expression; and yet in all this exhibition of contrasted inertness, motion and strain, there is much that is merely show. The effort of Nicodemus and Joseph is unreal, for the cere-cloth which they hold bears no trace of tension, and experience tells us that two men in these positions would hardly lift the manly load between them. But in spite of these incongruities and imperfections, which indeed defy detection unless we free ourselves from the charm that enwraps us, the scene looks real; and the faults are neutralized by modulations of darkness and gleams

of light cropping up here and there with a startling vividness peculiar to Titian, or by tones of a penetrant force and richness which stir fibres that would remain inevitably motionless before pictures of the Tuscan school. Both light and shade and colour are made subservient to the concentration of focal effect. Whilst the form of Nicodemus throws the head and frame of the Redeemer into darkness, the whole of the legs and parts about the hips shine brightly in the ray which strikes simultaneously on the dazzling white of the cere-cloth and illumines the bearded profile of Joseph, the fine cut features of John, and the faces of the Maries, casting a lurid glare that fitfully flits from a break in the wind-beaten heavens. The same gleam sets the clouds in the distant sky into red edges, and sheds a depth as of night on the tree-tufted knoll to the right, in a recess of which the sepulchre is yawning. The "Entombment" closes a period which opened with the "Christ" of "The Tribute Money." It still reminds us of Giorgione in the picturesque form and outblown hair of the Evangelist. It still recalls Palma Vecchio in a certain moulding of face and limbs, in shallow depressions of stuff in drapery, and in contrasts that bring before us varieties of weather-beaten flesh in males, and pearly skin in women. As regards colour, effect and elevation of proportion, it is far ahead of anything that either Palma or Giorgione ever produced, whilst as regards expression and the rendering of passion no painter of the Venetian School can now compare with Titian. Not to speak of the calm repose of the

Saviour, or the busy intentness of Joseph, there is a wildness of anguish in the Magdalen, a depth of agonized grief in the Virgin, and a tumult of feeling in the Evangelist which stir the soul, and for technical handling who shall say that Titian was ever surpassed, when he notes how subtly the livid faces are blenched by grief, and lighted with the sun's glare or pitted in tone against the glow of ruddy hair. Everywhere a grand facility and surprising versatility in touch. Here a surface worked out with liquid tint modelled into thin softness of film, there great body of pigment with spare saturation, and occasional charge of solid colour, an intertress of delicate and studied blending, heightened by golden reflexes. But whilst the master still reminds us of his earlier companions in the field which he now occupies without a rival, he reveals to us also the sources from which his disciples in the Venetian School were inspired. Of Palma and Giorgione there is a reminiscence which tells of that which has passed and gone, whilst certain forms like that of the bending Nicodemus or Joseph foreshadow the coming of Paul Veronese and Giacomo Bassano; and it is well thus early to note the spring at which these great provincials drew, because it is the fashion to urge that Titian took from them at a later period what—it is clear—they merely took from him.

The "Entombment," "a Mantua piece in the first privy lodging at Whitehall," was sold to Jabach after the death of Charles the First for £120. It had been a favourite, we cannot doubt, of Van Dyck, whose

style was greatly influenced by it. A clever Venetian —perhaps a disciple in Titian's own workshop, made an exact copy of it, which, till lately, was preserved in the Manfrini Collection.*

Amongst the sitters to whom Titian occasionally gave an hour at this period, Jacopo di Francesco Soranzo should be numbered; he was a patrician of fortune at a period of national penury, and thought it worth while in 1522 to pay 14,000 ducats for the office of procurator. Titian, who was commissioned to paint his portrait for the Procuratie, performed his task with a light and skilful hand, and the face, with its lean shape and piercing eye, its grey hair and white beard, still stands out with a certain noblesse against the dark ground of a damasked silk pelisse. But unhappily the canvas was removed from its place, and transferred to the Academy, where it underwent one of those radical processes of restoring which too often obliterate the traces of the master hand.†

* The canvas of the "Entombment" is registered in an inventory of the Mantuan Palace in 1627. (Darco, Delle Arti di Mantova, ii. 160.) It is now No. 465 at the Louvre, and is noted in Bathoe's Catalogue as 4 ft. 4 in. high, by 7 ft. long; in Villot's Catalogue as m. 1.48 by 2.05. The text has failed to notice the crown of thorns at the foot of the stone on which Joseph of Arimathea is kneeling, and the clever bunches of weeds near it. The legs of the three men are bare, their feet in sandals. The whole is fairly preserved. Engravings are numerous by G. Rousselet, Chaperon, Masson, Johs. de Marc, Filhol, and Landon. Photograph by Braun. See Bathoe's Catalogue, p. 96, and the Catalogue of the Louvre. The Manfrini copy, which was lately sold, was on canvas, and of the same size as the original.

† This canvas is now No. 319 in the Venice Academy, its size is m. 1.03 h. by 0.89. The whole of the upper part of the background, and both hands, are new, the rest much injured. On a patch of canvas at top the old inscription, "JACOBVS SVPERANTIO, MDXXII."

During the days when Titian threw off this and other trifles, he was busy with two of the grandest of the works of his middle period, the "Madonna" of San Niccolò de' Frari, and the "Madonna" of Casa Pesaro; and it is of no small interest to note that though the latter was completed earlier than its companion, the Madonna di San Niccolò gives evidence in some of its parts of a later handling. At the period of its first exhibition in 1523, public attention was strongly directed to it, and Marin Sanuto went purposely to see it in the little church of San Niccolò, then within the cloisters of Santa Maria de' Frari.* In the pontificate of Clement the Fourteenth, it was removed to Rome, where Volpato the engraver, and Hamilton the painter, induced the Pope to purchase it. For some time it hung in the Quirinal, but was subsequently taken to the Vatican Gallery, where some artistic Vandal reduced it from an arched panel to a square.†

has been renewed with the cyphers MDXIIII. But compare Cicogna, Iscr. Ven., ii. 58, and iv. 630, and Zanotto's Pinacoteca dell' Accad. Venet., folio, Ven. 1834, in which the portrait is engraved.

In the Academy of Venice another portrait is numbered 465, and described as representing the procurator Antonio Capello, by Titian. It hung originally in the Procuratie. But here again the canvas has been patched. The inscription, ANTONIVS CAPELLO, MDXXIIII, is new, and the figure, a half-length, bearded, and in a red silk robe, is injured by repainting to such an extent that it looks more like the work of D. Mazza than of Titian.

* Sanuto's Diary, 1523, as extracted by Cicogna in MS. notes to Tizianello's Anon., *u. s.*

† See Galerie des tableaux située au troisième étage des Loges Vaticanes, Rome, 1866, p. 39. It is evidence of Northcote's slight feeling for composition that he considered "the upper and lower parts of the altar-piece as nearly void of connection as if they were two different pictures." (Northcote's Life of Titian, 8vo, London, 1830, vol. i. p. 72.)

In the pages of Vasari and Dolce we find a reflex of Venetian opinion in respect of it. The friars who had first intended to give their commission to Paris Bordone, changed their mind and entrusted it to Titian, who exerted himself to produce a masterpiece.* Titian himself considered it so good that he drew the composition on wood with his own hands,† and Pordenone is reported to have said that it was not painting but flesh itself.‡ Various parts struck different people at the same time as perfect. Dolce thought that the gold brocade of St. Nicholas showed roughness and reflexions, and woof and weft, like nature; he considered the St. Sebastian to have the semblance of life.§ Vasari, in a characteristic description, displayed the inward struggles of a man whose heart told him to praise, whilst his education urged him to reprove. The nude Sebastian, he said, looked like true flesh, and was held to be fine though it was taken from life, without displaying any artifice of selection, and showed nothing more than an accurate presentment of nature.‖ Ridolfi remarked that St. Nicholas was drawn from the antique Laocoon.¶ All admired the realism, some the classicism, none the colour. Simple in the highest degree, the composition must have been perfect in symmetry before the arching was removed in which the dove was seen shedding its rays on the head of the

* Vasari, xiii. p. 47.

† Tizianello's Anon., p. ix., and Vasari, xiii. p. 26. The print is by Andrea Andreani, but there is also an engraving from the picture by Lefèbre.

‡ Dolce, Dialogo, p. 66.

§ Ibid.

‖ Vas. xiii. 26.

¶ Ridolfi, Maraviglie, i. p. 224.

Madonna. Beneath it the Virgin is placed on a dome of cloud intercepting the blue sky, two angels at her side carrying wreaths, the boy Christ on her lap with a wreath also; Mother and Child bending over and looking downward at a group of six saints standing in the curve of a roofless temple. To the right St. Sebastian bound to the pillar, stuck with arrows, but of serene and meditative aspect, his body in full light, his face in half shade; to the left St. Nicholas in episcopals, with book and crozier, looking up; between the two, and slightly thrown back, St. Peter carrying the keys, St. Francis and St. Anthony of Padua; and, behind St. Nicholas to the left, St. Catherine as a martyr. Above, all silver and light; below, a dusky wall, against which the nude flesh of Sebastian contrasts with the brown frocks of the Franciscans, the yellow mantle of Peter, the brocades of Nicholas, and the crimson dress of Catherine. Ridolfi is right. The face of St. Nicholas with its upturned foreshortening reflects the lineaments of the Laocoon, of which a model had been made in these days by Sansovino for Cardinal Domenico Grimani, and a cast of which was kept in Titian's atelier.* Pordenone is right, Sebastian is like flesh itself. What we now see is not to all appearance pigment, but something living and flexible, the substance of which would apparently yield to the touch—a model, as Vasari suggests, in whose limbs and torso no refine-

* Zanetti (Pitt. Venet., p. 148) states that he studied from this cast. But compare also Temanza's Life of Sansovino, 4to, Ven. 1778, p. 6.

ment can be discerned, but whose frame is rendered with matchless skill and mastery. Dolce is correct, for the dress of St. Nicholas is a marvellous example of technical imitation; but beyond all this there is colour; and with it a semblance of the reality throughout, that stamps the master as unique in the annals of Italian art. Pordenone we should think would admire not the flesh only, but the large and majestic forms, the powerful action and manly expression, for in these he himself excelled; he would admire also, since he tried to acquire it, that wonderful clearness of cloud and sky, that playfulness of angels, that grace in the momentary action of Virgin and Child, which reminds us of Correggio, whose charming sprightliness and humour in glories of this kind was displayed in its purest form in the churches of Parma. Above all he would envy Titian's exuberant richness of tone, his incomparable ease in handling, and his skill in reproducing nude form. Titian indeed not only challenges admiration for all these qualities, he also challenges comparison in another sense. We look back almost involuntarily from the Virgin in glory at Ancona, to the Virgin in glory of San Niccolò, from the St. Sebastian of the Salute or of Brescia to that of the Vatican. Titian attains to as much clearness and rounding as Correggio without falling into any of his conventional affectations. He transcends Allegri in the purity and brightness of his colours. His St. Sebastian is neither as young nor as handsome as that of the Salute, nor as classical as that of Brescia; but the

form if less minutely studied, or less carefully finished is more broadly real, more perfectly toned, and more imposing as a modelled imitation of nature. Technically, there is no mean progress to register since the days of the Assunta; and richness of palette in tints or impast is only equalled by the subtlety of blending which presents colour in such magic perfection, such forcible contrasts and such ringing harmony as to affect the eye like a reality and baffle analysis. Here we may believe the system described by Palma Giovine was fully applied; and it would be hard to tell how often the panel was covered up and put aside before the beds of pigment of which we see the thickness through the crevasses was brought to the wonderful kneaded surface which we now discern.*

The death of Antonio Grimani, and the accession

* This panel, numbered XIX in the Vatican Gallery, was taken thither from the Quirinal in the time of Pius VII. It measures m. 3.98 high, by 2.63. On a tablet affixed to the ruin above St. Anthony's head we read "TITIANVS FACIEBAT." The mutilation of the top is said to have been carried out for the purpose of getting a pendant to Raphael's Transfiguration. A vain search was made quite lately for the upper arching. A new panelling now keeps together the eleven boards of which the table is formed; but some damaging horizontal splits are still visible. In some places the colour was altered by time and smoke, and the whole background of the ruin is more or less in a bad state; the shadows and semitones are modified throughout, the glazings in several parts removed, and deep cracks filled up with paint. Altogether new are the foot of St. Francis and a piece of St. Sebastian's right leg below the knee. When Sir Joshua Reynolds saw the picture in San Niccolò at Venice in 1752, it was so dark that nothing was seen but the body of St. Sebastian, who looked as if he had lost his head. See Sir Joshua's Diary, in Leslie and Taylor's work, i. 76. The picture is photographed after the original by Alinari.

of Andrea Gritti to the dogeship on the 20th of May, 1523, imposed new duties upon Titian, and in some respect improved his position at Venice. Gritti came to the ducal throne after a long and active life of diplomacy and arms. He was sixty-eight years old, and a man whose least advantages were derived from a handsome face and a commanding form. Detained and confined at Constantinople during the great Turkish war, he negotiated from his cell the peace of Venice with Bajazet the Second. A prisoner of the French after the recapture of Brescia by Gaston de Foix, he exchanged the status of a captive for that of an ambassador, and produced the treaty of Blois which gave new preponderance to French councils at Venice. At Marignano and Novarra he shared the varying fortunes of Francis the First and his generals, and acquired that fondness for the French which gave him the reputation of a partisan of France. But a thorough Venetian in subtlety, he concealed his partiality, and when it appeared that a Spanish and German alliance was inevitable, he signed the capitulation of July, 1523, with Charles the Fifth, which cost the republic 200,000 ducats, preparatory to preventing the Venetian army from taking part in the battle of Pavia. After the release of Francis the First, he turned quickly round again and joined the enemies of Charles the Fifth. One of the earliest incidents connected with his tenure of power has been ingeniously connected with his partial leaning to France on the one hand, and his nascent approval of Titian's skill as a painter on the other. At the foot of a stair

in the Palace of St. Mark, leading from the Doge's private apartments to the Senate Hall, a large fresco by Titian represents St. Christopher wading with the infant Christ on his shoulder in the shallows of the lagoons, the distance being a view of Venice with the Campanile and the cupolas of St. Mark rising above the horizon. In date of September 1523 Guicciardini "records the arrival of the French army near Milan, and its encampment at San Cristofano, within a mile of the city between the Ticino and the Roman gate;"* and it is supposed that intelligence of this movement having reached the Doge, he commanded Titian to celebrate the event by painting this fresco. Being a Gallican, Gritti would thus gratify his favourite inclination without offending the imperialists who might have taken offence if St. Louis had been preferred to St. Charles.† It might be also that Gritti was aware of the Marquis of Pescara's known desire and expressed intention of diverting the waters of the lagoons in order to capture and extinguish the republic, and that he intended to suggest that a saint might wade through the waters to the Lido, but a mortal never.‡ Whatever may be true of these hypotheses, it is hardly doubtful that the fresco of St. Christopher was painted at this time, and being a solitary example of an art which the master had not

* Guicciardini's History, vol. iii. p. 404.

† For this ingenious theory we are indebted to Mr. Rawdon Brown, who truly observes (in a private communication), "Manner, locality, and chronology, as likewise the doge's politics (which are alluded to by the English ambassador Pace, A.D. 1523), all favour my hypothesis."

‡ See for Pescara's plan, Cicogna, Iscr. Ven. vi. 184.

practised for several years it invites attention. It is clear at once to the most unpractised eye, that however great the master may be in oils, he is out of his element in fresco. He disappoints us, not because he is a worse draughtsman or a less careful executant than at Padua, but because he still lacks the freshness, the transparency, and the colour which charm us in his pictures; and this we may believe arises solely from want of familiarity with tools and materials, and a want of knack which makes his shadows opaque and dark, his lights discordant and streaky. There is no denying a certain grandeur in the composition, and certain qualities in the treatment. The saint is made to support himself under the weight of his load with a long and heavy pole, and he seems surprised as he looks up to the Divine Infant, who sits astride of his neck and grasps his dress with the left hand, whilst he points with the right to heaven. The figure suggests extraordinary physical strength and size. The Child sits very prettily in his white shirt, and looks very arch as the breeze which curls the water of the lagoon blows out sail-like his little tunic.

There is a grand fall in the folds of the Saint's red and green drapery, which flaps in the wind that banks up the clouds above the horizon; and the old Titianesque feeling is displayed in the clever opposition of tinted flesh and stuffs to balmy air and pearly skies. The forms truly bear the impress of that period in Titian's art which produced the Madonna of San Niccolò de' Frari, and culminated in the composi-

tion of Peter Martyr; but it would almost appear as if the unusual medium in which he worked had to some extent paralyzed the spirit of the Master; or the element of colour fails to play its usual part, and leaves unveiled the common realism of a fisherman poling his way—as if in a punt—against the strength of a driving current. There is something short and massive in a shape of which the various parts are brought into curves of exaggerated swell, and the joints and articulations, though correctly drawn, are made to project obtrusively, the sense of instant volition being lost in the strain which a model might keep up for any part of an hour without excessive exertion.* But with all its faults, this fresco is the work of a master—of a master too, whose influence produced great talents in the sequel. It was one of the works which Paul Veronese—we should think—first looked at, one which Paris Bordone, and Lotto, probably studied; and it is not improbable that we may thus ascribe to this period the connection which united these artists in the relative positions of master and disciple.

We have seen Titian at Padua and Vicenza engaged in works which he shared with Campagnola. Later still he painted at the Hall of Great Council

* To see this fresco one must enter the door above which it is placed, ascend the steps, and turn from the landing to look back at it. There is no direct light on the wall, and Titian shows his mastery in producing an effect suited to the semi-obscurity of the place. The figure of St. Christopher is larger than life, the flesh lights of a warm brown, worked up with hatchings, lighter in light, dark in shadow, broken here and there by cold touches. Consult Ridolfi, Marav. i., 216. There is a photograph of the fresco by Naya.

with Lodovico di Giovanni and Antonio Buxei. From that time forward the names of his assistants were overshadowed by his own. But Paris Bordone was very soon to take an important place in Venetian art, and he was now very probably beginning to assert his right to be counted among the rising generation of Venetian artists. Born in 1500 at Treviso, Paris came early to be formed by Titian at Venice, and he soon showed a decided tendency to realism. But whereas in Titian realism acquired no obtrusive importance, it soon expanded in Bordone to disagreeable proportions, and although he succeeded very cleverly in a masterpiece like the fisherman presenting the Doge's ring, he much more frequently fell into a technical imitation of accidental peculiarities in stuff, or coarse voluptuous naturalism in male and female nudes to please any but an unrefined taste. When he first left the school he produced pictures that were often taken for Titian's, and one of these, a portrait of Giovanni Ram, witnessing the ceremony of John baptizing Christ, is still preserved in the gallery of the Capitol at Rome. But here he recalls Titian chiefly in a landscape, and in the clever handling of a portrait profile; whilst in other pieces he distinctly imitates Titian; and in the Madonna with Saints of Sant' Agostino at Crema, he takes almost bodily into the picture the St. Christopher of the public palace.*

* The Baptism, No. 124 in the gallery of the Capitol, is clearly that which the Anonimo (Morelli, p. 79) thus describes under date of 1531 in the gallery of Zuanne Ram: "Tavola of St. John baptising Christ in Jordan, who stands up to the knees in the river,

About the time when Titian painted this fresco, he was probably under orders to adorn with subjects the Doge's chapel at the head of the Giant's staircase in the public palace.* Though dedicated to St. Nicholas and called by his name, this chapel had originally been furnished with frescos representing incidents from the legend of Pope Alexander; but after a thorough renovation in 1505–6, it had been left without pictorial adornments.† In May, 1524, the necessity for further repairs became apparent, and Andrea Gritti resolved to decorate the whole of the

with a fine landscape, and M. Zuanne Ram portrayed to the waist, his back to the spectator, by Titian." If Titian had anything to do with this picture, he did no more than order its execution by a disciple in his workshop, and that disciple was Paris Bordone. The Baptist to the left kneels on the steep bank of Jordan, resting his left hand on a tree-stump, and pouring the water with his right on the Saviour's head. Behind the group are trees. The sun sheds rays over distant hill and bush and farmstead, and five cherubs' heads are seen in the sky. In the middle ground a small figure in an attitude of terror, and two vultures, one of which feeds on a dead kid. In the corner to the right, Zuanne Ram shows his head and shoulders, looking up, and pointing with his left hand. There is no balance in the composition, and little that recalls the breadth and grandeur of Titian in the figures. The picture is a pleasing youthful production of Bordone in his Titianesque form. But it is not to be forgotten that the panel has been cleaned and robbed of some of its finer glazings. Photograph by Alinari.

The St. Christopher with a variety in the turn of the head, and in the position of the right leg is one of the figures in an altarpiece, representing the Madonna with Saints, by Paris Bordone. From St. Agostino of Crema, where it was seen by the Anonimo (Morelli, p. 55); it passed but a few years since into the Tadini Collection at Lovere. Vasari also mentions this picture, xiii. 50. It is on canvas, with figures of life-size.

* "A mano sinistra tra la scala de' Giganti e la scala coperta." Boschini Ricche Minere, Sest di S. Marco, p. 54.

† Lorenzi, 131. This renovation was made by Georgio Spavento.

interior in the costliest style. He ordered a slab of marble with figures in mezzo rilievo to be placed on the altar, and confided the frescos of the walls to Titian. In the lunette above the altar, the Virgin and child between St. Nicholas and the kneeling Doge, right and left of the altar the four Evangelists, and in the lunette above the entrance, St. Mark seated on a majestic lion.* It is evidence of the importance of these wall paintings, which unhappily perished, that no other works of this period by Titian have been preserved; and it would appear that, with the exception of the portraits which he was obliged by the tenure of his place to execute, Titian did little at this time that was thought worthy of remembrance.† Gritti no doubt sat for the likeness which Titian prepared, according to his habit, for the studio; and then again—we may think—served as a model for portraits of which historical notices are preserved, and especially for that which perished in the Hall of Great Council at Venice during the fire of 1577. It is to be regretted that time should have dealt so hardly with the semblance of this heroic Doge. In a working canvas belonging to Count Sebastian Giustiniani Barbarigo at Padua, the materials and form as well as the measures are similar to those previously noted in a portrait of Antonio Grimani, belonging to the same collection. The fine canvas, thin priming and smooth surface are particularly remarkable. The

* Compare Boschini Ricche Minere, Sest di S. Marco, p. 54, Ridolfi Marav. i. 216, Sansovino, ed. Martinioni, p. 321.

† The frescos were first white-washed. The chapel itself was dismantled in 1797. Zanotto, Nuovissima Guida, p. 126.

Doge is facing slightly to the left, his right hand inactive, his features completely illumined, but flushed with a purply red, and enframed in a white beard and whiskers. The ducal cap of white silk with yellow arabesques is edged with a broad gold binding. The white silk mantle interwoven with yellow flowers has gold buttons hanging from cords at close intervals. A yellow doublet fits the frame closely, its fur lining appearing at the seams of the breast and at the wrist. The form and face are those of a handsome man of large stature, with eyes wide apart, an aquiline but fine cut nose, grand lips, and a forehead broad as that of Jove. Though strongly marked, the features display but little of the bold and impulsive handling of Titian, yet it may be that this appearance is caused by modern stippling, which has altered, and all but covered most of the parts. Once more we meet with a canvas which bears the aspect of a study, yet for which long sittings were taken, whilst the parts seem finished at one painting; and this is characteristic of the drawing which is carefully made out, as well as of the modelling which is carried out with very thin application of pigment. But here, as in earlier portraits of the Giustiniani collection, it may be that we have genuine work of Titian retouched and changed after Titian's death, and further altered by subsequent "restoring." *

* The canvas in the Giustiniani Collection measures m. 1.20 high, by 1. The figure is of life-size on a repainted back-ground. There are heavy marks of restoring on the right eye; but parts of the hand are preserved. On the parapet at the lower edge of the picture we read: "ANDREAS GRITTI VENETAR DVX." That

We recognize Gritti's features again in portraits at Vienna, Florence, and St. Petersburg; but the first, though marked as a Titian in the Czernin collection, and commendable as a clever work of art, is almost unmistakably by Pordenone, whilst the second, belonging to Mr. Cotterel at Florence, has received injuries which almost preclude an opinion, and the third, originally in the Barbarigo Palace at Venice, presents the form of a damaged Tintoretto. None of the Doges was more frequently painted by Titian than Gritti, none of Titian's portraits were more celebrated than those which he made of that Doge. Charles the First had one, Rubens copied a second of the replicas.*

But Gritti was not a patron of Titian only. He was a friend of Titian's patrons, the Duke of Ferrara

this is the portrait noticed by Ridolfi in the Barbarigo Collection there can be no reasonable doubt (Marav. i. 262).

* The portrait in the Czernin Collection has been described in the Life of Pordenone. Mr. Cotterel's likeness of Gritti (life-size on canvas) is turned in the opposite direction, being a front view of the body in furred yellow damask robes, and the head in profile to the right on a dark ground. One hand is pointing, the other (the left) holds a handkerchief. The tones of the flesh are unfortunately stippled up to an empty uniformity, so that we remain doubtful whether the painter is Titian or Lorenzo Lotto. The third portrait, No. 103 in the Hermitage at Petersburg, is a three-quarters face to the left, with the right hand holding a glove. The surface is so injured by repainting, that the original author of this picture can only be guessed at as Tintoretto. For Charles the First's replica, see Bathoe's Catalogue, p. 104. The picture, a private purchase, was 4 ft. 4 in. by 3 ft. 4 in. and a half length. Rubens' copy is registered in the inventory in Sainsbury's Papers, *u. s.*, p. 238. Mr. Ruskin's "Portrait of a Doge," said to be Gritti (*Times*, January 3rd, 1870), has not been seen by the authors. It was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1870.

and the Marquess of Mantua, he was the first to recognize the talents of Sansovino, whom he invited to Venice at his accession, and he was mainly instrumental in laying the foundation of those intimate relations between the sculptor and the painter, which nearly lasted till the wane of the century.*

In the spring of 1524 Titian fell ill of a fever, which threatened to become chronic. It would have been folly, under these circumstances, to attempt a journey towards the Po, where fevers were more easily caught than cured. Still Alfonso claimed of Titian the performance of a promise to visit his court, and complained in his usual manner of want of punctuality, whilst Titian more than ever excused himself on the plea of overwhelming business public and private. On the 13th of March he told Tebaldi that in spite of intermittent attacks he was then convalescent, and purposed to ask for a medical certificate which should recommend a change of air, and justify a visit to Ferrara; but on this, as on previous occasions, the artist was too busy to move, and merely laboured at home at the pictures of his patron. When he thought Tebaldi too angry to listen to his excuses, he wrote personally to the Duke, and so gained snatches of breathing time. At last Alfonso's agent was able to write on the 29th of November, that after a hundred delays Titian had agreed to leave Venice on the morrow, and that, lest he should repent of his

* See "Sansovino's life in Cicogna," Iscr. Ven. iv. 24. "Temanza's Life of Sansovino," fol. Ven. 1752, p. 13, and Vasari, xiii. 81.

determination, a barge had been sent to his lodgings to wait his leisure. But Titian's stay, Tebaldi added, would necessarily be short; he was bound to return to Venice for Christmas to complete the commissions upon which he was then busy; and the delivery of these would enable him to sail again for Ferrara, where he would remain as long as the Duke required him. That Titian then performed his promise seems proved by payments for colours which were sent to him from Venice to Ferrara, and by notices in the accounts of pictures which he painted by order of the Duke.* But what these pieces were was never put on record. We can only guess that he began, and carried away for subsequent completion, the portrait of the Duke's confidential man of letters, Tommaso Mosti, whom we saw witnessing the marriage of his master with Laura Dianti, and whose likeness, now at the Pitti, shared the fate of others destroyed by time and restoring.†

Andrea Gritti meanwhile watched the progress of Titian's labours in the palace of the Doges, and, we may think, rewarded him liberally; but not satisfied with mere pecuniary acknowledgments, he used his influence to promote the painter's family, and in April, 1525, he sanctioned the appointment of Titian's brother-in-law, Matteo Soldano, to the office of "can-

* See the proofs of the above in Campori's Tiziano e gli Estensi, pp. 17–18.

† This portrait, No. 495, at the Pitti, is a half length, on canvas, of a young man in a black pelisse and cap, with his gloved right hand on a book. Most of it is covered with new paint. On the back of the new canvas, to which the picture was transposed, and perhaps copied from an old inscription, are the words: "TOMMASO MOSTI DI ANNI XXV, L'ANNO MDXXVI: THITIANO DACADORO PITTORE."

celliere" at Feltre, and filled up the post of a "mineral vicar," or inspector of mines, which was thus vacated, by giving it to Titian's father Gregorio.*

An epitaph exists in the church of St. Sebastian at Venice, in which Amelio Cortona, a lawyer of name, records the virtues of his ancestor, a general in the Venetian army. By his will, in date of October 31, 1555, Amelio "bequeaths his 'Annunciation of the most Holy Virgin' by Titian" to the brotherhood of San Rocco at Venice; and it is the good fortune of the representatives of that fraternity still to possess this valuable relic.† It surpasses the same subject at Treviso in breadth of handling and simplicity of landscape, as well as in richness of colour and delicacy of gradations; and a serene composure dwells in the attitude of the Virgin kneeling prayerful at her desk, which indicates the maturity of the painter's talent. But the piece would be more perfect if the angel who hops into the terrace on a cloud was not presented in a dancing motion, which gives a worldliness to the composition inseparable, it would seem, from Titian's treatment of this theme. We are pleasantly reminded of early phases of Venetian art by the partridge on the floor and the basket at Mary's feet; and we thus involuntarily measure the distance which separates the simpler staidness of older pictorial forms from the gorgeous brilliancy of Titian's time.‡

* See the record in Appendix.

† See Moschini Guida di Venezia, 12mo, Venice, 1815, ii. p. 217; and an extract from the will in Cicogna, Iscr. Ven., iv. 141.

‡ The canvas hangs high up on the staircase leading to the upper

More elaborate and studied, and in every sense grandiose, the "Madonna di Casa Pesaro" reveals more surely than the "Annunciation" the breadth of Titian's talent, and takes us, not without preparation, to the height of his pictorial fame. Seven years elapsed before he brought this miracle of skill, in May, 1526, to completion; but in those seven years he also brought to perfection the last and finest of all forms of presentation pictures, the noblest combination of the homely and devotional with palatial architecture—the most splendid and solemn union of the laws of composition and colour with magic light and shade. The mere expression in words of the painter's theme fails to convey a conception of his aim and purpose, or an idea of the way in which he solves innumerable problems hitherto left untried by artists of previous ages. St. Peter, St. Francis, and St. Anthony of Padua implore the intercession of the Virgin in favour of the members of the Pesaro family. On the eve of sailing to the conquest of Santa Maura, Jacopo Pesaro, then Bishop of Paphos, had sat to Titian, who represented him praying for victory before the throne of St. Peter. Twenty-three years after the victory had been won, Jacopo again sat to the same master, who showed him in the attitude of thanksgiving

story of the Scuola di San Rocco. The figures are as large as life. To the right the Virgin kneels at her desk at the foot of a pillar, on a terrace with a stone balustrade. The angel to the left, in red dress and short white sleeves, points with his right hand to the dove that descends towards the Virgin, and carries the lily in his left; a red cloth hangs on the balustrade in front of a flight of four columns. An open book lies on the Virgin's desk. This picture is engraved in Le Fèbre.

before the throne of Mary, escorted by saints, and accompanied by members of his family. We followed step by step, till now, the development of Titian's genius; but who could have foretold in 1503 the greatness of its expansion? Who would have thought that an art so free and so bold would have gained such an increase of boldness and freedom, and associated with it such a depth and subtlety of power in every department of the craft. Far away from those humble conceptions of place which mark the saintly pictures of earlier times, the Pesari kneel in the portico of a temple, the pillars of which soar to the sky in proportions hitherto unseen. The Virgin's throne is raised to a platform, to which access is obtained by two high steps, and still the plinths upon which the pillars rest are as high as the Virgin's form and the die of stone on which she sits, and the human shape is but a pigmy in those colossal surroundings. We might fancy that such a massive edifice on so large a scale would needs crush the figures and spoil them of their grandeur; but whoever should fancy this would misjudge Titian, who knew how to temper all this vastness and fetter the eye to the points upon which it required to be fettered, on the group of the Virgin and her noble band of adorers. She sits on her throne, bending down in a graceful kindly way, and directs her glance towards the kneeling "Baffo," her white veil falling over one shoulder, but caught on the other by the infant Christ, who peeps with delightful glee from beneath it at St. Francis. High on the platform to which the

steps ascend, the saints occupy a position of natural vantage. To the left front of the throne St. Peter at a desk interrupts his reading, and marks the line with his fingers as he turns to look down at Baffo, who kneels in prayer on the floor below. In rear between both an armed knight with the standard of the church unfurled and a captive Turk bound by a rope, symbolizes the victory of the Pesari, which is further indicated by a twig of laurel on the flag-pole. Near the infant Christ on the right, St. Francis extatically looks up, and showing the marks of the stigmata in both hands, points at the same time downwards to Benedetto Pesaro, who kneels with the members of his family—three men and a handsome boy—on the floor behind him. St. Anthony, in the background near St. Francis, is all but lost in shadow. The arms of the Borgia, embroidered on the dark red and gold damask of the flag, the scutcheon of the Pesari beneath it, the keys of St. Peter lying on the steps, are small but telling points in the picture.* High up on a spray of clouds that enwreathes the pillars of the temple, two angels playfully sport with the cross; and, with that wonderful insight which a painter gets who has studied cloud form flitting over Alpine crags, Titian has not only thrown a many-toned gradation of shade on the vapour, but shown its projected shadow on the pillar. The light falls on the clouds, illumines the sky between the pillars, and sheds a clear glow on

* The arms of Borgia: the tiara and cross-keys, the shield red, with the ox on it, quartered with a field of black and gold horizontal bands. The arms of Pesaro: a shield azure, with seven wedges or, on the left of the field.

the angels, casting its brightest ray on the Madonna and the body of the infant Christ. It tips the faces of the friars and the bald head of the grey-bearded Peter, displays the gorgeous tones of his blue tunic and yellow mantle, and falls at last on the profiles of the kneeling Pesari. There are grand planes of shadow, too, sharply projected or mildly suffused; down the pillars and past the Madonna to the groups below; or along the pedestal of the throne to Peter's desk, and the platform steps, edging the standard of the Borgias, the armour of the knight, the profile and black silk dress of "Baffo," whose hands and white sleeves catch the sun as they are held out and joined in prayer. Decompose the light or the shadow, and you find incredible varieties of subtlety, which make the master's art unfathomable. Both are balanced into equal values with a breadth quite admirable, the utmost darks being very heavy and strong without losing their transparency; the highest lights dazzling in brightness, yet broken and full of sparkle. Round the form of the infant Christ the play of white drapery is magic in effect. Hardly less remarkable, and telling of Titian's minute realism, the fingers of Mary press the breast of the babe, and show the flexibility of the flesh into which they sink. The modelling is so grand in the simplicity of its rounding, as to produce the impression of a plastic surface. Look into it, and this simplicity involves innumerable and most delicate modulations. Miracles of texture are the silks and brocades, which contrast so admirably with the plain stuffs of the dresses in the Virgin and

Saints. In the portraits a family resemblance runs through every head, Benedetto, who died in 1503, being painted from an earlier likeness, the rest more obviously from life. But nothing can exceed the dignified, calm, or appropriate motion of them all. Each expresses some peculiar feeling, and the boy, who ceases to take part in the ceremony absorbing his elders, and looks round at the spectator, is charming. To the various harmonizing elements of hue, of light and of shade, that of colour superadded brings the picture to perfection—its gorgeous tinting so subtly wrought and so wonderfully interweaving with sun and darkness and varied textures as to resolve itself with the rest into a vast and incomprehensible whole, which comes to the eye an ideal of grand and elevated beauty—a sublime unity that shows the master who created it to have reached a point in art unsurpassed till now, and unattainable to those who came after him.* One sees by the study which it caused how great must have been the effect of this noble creation on the painters of the time. In the pages of chroniclers the "Madonna di Ca.Pesaro" was eclipsed by the "Martyrdom of Peter Martyr," because that altarpiece embodied sensationally dra-

* The last payment for this grand picture, which still hangs in its original place at the Frari, was made on the 27th of May, 1526: for which see the Appendix. The figures are above life size, on a canvas arched at top. A few years ago a layer of oil and terra rossa laid on the back of the canvas, darkened the picture, which had been restored by G. Bertani (see Moschini, Guida di Ven. ii. 194). There are etchings of this work in Le Fèbre and Patina. The principal group in red chalk, in the Albertina at Vienna, was photographed by Braun.

matic incident, and exhibited some conspicuous changes in the master's art. But Paul Veronese studied the first as carefully as the second; and we see him casting a composition in the same mould, with similar adjuncts of architecture and church furniture in an "Adoration of the Virgin" at the Venice Academy, where, with an incongruity of which Titian would not have been guilty, the boy Baptist stands on a pedestal at the very centre of the picture, and presents his back in a prominent way to the spectator.* There was no place more favourable to innovation in ecclesiastical subjects than Venice, where freedom of thought and opinion was allowed to an extent unknown in other cities; and Titian availed himself of this and made innovations innumerable; but the tact which he possessed was not handed down to his successors; and Paolo Veronese, who died of a cold which he caught at a procession, was once very severely handled and reprimanded for pictorial delinquencies by the Inquisition.

* No. 519, at the Venice Academy, representing the Virgin and Child, with St. Joseph near her; and below, St. Christine, St. Francis, the boy Baptist, and St. Jerome.

CHAPTER IX.

Pietro Aretino, his first acquaintance with Titian.—His likeness and portrait of Girolamo Adorno by Titian.—Both pictures are sent to the Marquess of Mantua.—The "triumvirate."—Titian at Mantua and Ferrara.—Portraits of the Gonzagas.—Altarpiece of Zoppé in Cadore.—Titian, Palma, Pordenone, and the Peter Martyr.—Sebastian del Piombo and Michaelangelo at Venice; their influence on Titian.—Peace of Bologna and coronation of Charles the Fifth.—Titian's visit to Bologna and likeness of Cornelia.—Death of Titian's wife.—St. Sebastian and other pieces at Mantua.—Benefice of Medole.—Pictures of St. Jerom, the Magdalen, and the Infant Baptist.—Portraits of Max Stampa, Francesco Sforza, and Christine of Denmark.—Aretino's comedy of the Marescalco.—Doge Gritti's votive picture.

PREVIOUS to the sack of Rome in 1527, Titian made the acquaintance of Pietro Aretino, pamphleteer, poet, and comic writer, of whom a satirist once penned the lines:

> "Questo e Pietro Aretino poeta tosco
> Che d' ogni un disse male, eccetto che di Dio;
> Scusandosi con dir, non lo conosco." *

Hardly a man of any note in Italy but stood connected with Aretino in some sort of personal or political relation; not a prince, Italian or foreign, but felt the necessity of buying his venal services. We have portraits of him at various ages: young, middle-aged, and old. In the earliest he looks a grand and

* These lines are appended to a portrait of Aretino, engraved by Hollar.

handsome bully; in the latest, he combines the fat of Vitellius with the seared aspect of Silenus, and his face is impressed with the stamp of all the vices for which the fierce and cruel age in which he lived was so remarkable. Publicity which is used in our day for the instruction and improvement of mankind, under laws which secure to individuals immunity from libellous attack, was put in motion, and one may say invented by Aretino, for the single purpose of filling his pockets. Like all men of his stamp, he was cursed with inordinate desires of every kind. His appetites in the culinary and other senses were such as no ordinary means could sate. He liked dinners, dress and high company, varied on occasion with the lower forms of debauch; he was in his way lavish and open-handed; and as he started penniless so he died fortuneless, but we may believe he spent generously on others the mere overflow of a treasury which was never replenished but by baseness, and it is probable that his generosity was never disinterested. How Titian came to be connected with such a man, and how, knowing him intimately, he kept up relations with him, is a strange feature in the life of an artist so great and so renowned; but from the first Aretino appeared to Titian as a man of influence with those who were the mainstays of his pictorial practice; and coming to Venice as he notoriously did, with strong recommendations to the Doge Andrea Gritti, Aretino could not but have had means to captivate at once a man whose livelihood depended in part upon this personage. But in order to understand Aretino's

career and his power over several classes of individuals, it is necessary that we should picture to ourselves the state of Italian society when he came to its surface. It was a time remarkable for the struggles of ambitious states possessed of national life to absorb others whose national life was less developed, regardless of race and language and personal antipathies. It was about the time when Francis the First conceived it possible to reign as Emperor of Germany, and Charles the Fifth thought to be lord of the Moors of Tunis; when both considered it feasible to absorb Italy, divided amongst petty princes, indeed, but comprising rulers like the Pope on the one hand, and the Venetian republic on the other. No doubt temporary success in a policy of this kind was easy of attainment by the use of force; but as an accompaniment to force or as a means for securing the gains acquired by force, bribery and intrigue would naturally suggest themselves; and these were employed without scruple on every side. Aretino—a parasite of the most dangerous kind—was placed by chance in a position to discover some of the secret machinery by which political springs were set in motion, and he soon grew into an occult power by working on the fears of some and the cupidity of others. Like a fungus on a dunghill he took advantage of a general corruption to live and to fatten, and he was not the less like a prosperous fungus because he happened to be poisonous. There is every reason to believe that he was the illegitimate son of a patrician of Arezzo. His mother Tita gave birth to him about 1492 in an

hospital at Arezzo; but the outer world discovered little that was authentic as to this and other points connected with Aretino's early life, which remained so obscure as to escape the vigilance of his most determined enemies, and a veil was thrown over him by the interested kindness of the people of his native town, who raised him in 1541 to the citizenship from which his illegitimate birth debarred him.* Aretino himself boasted that he was never at school and never had a tutor;† but he doubtless had some knowledge of reading, since he was apprenticed to a binder in Perugia;‡ and though it is clear that he neither studied nor understood Greek or Latin, it is equally clear that he acquired at a very early age the art of writing in his own tongue. There must have been something in him too besides good looks and impudence to captivate a man like Agostino Chigi, who was his patron at Rome from 1517 to 1524. In what capacity he served this well-known merchant has not been stated; but in some way he gained a livelihood and made himself useful to the banker and his exalted customers Leo the Tenth and Clement the Seventh.§ It was in Chigi's service that he made acquaintance with Sansovino, Sebastian del Piombo, Marcantonio Raimondi, and Giulio Romano, and we may judge of the tone which distinguished some of these artists, when we remember that Giulio designed some prints which Marcantonio engraved and Aretino furnished

* For this, consult Vita di Pietro Aretino, by Giammaria Mazzucchelli, 8vo, Milan, 1830, pp. 7–8.

† Aretino to Mariano Borro, in Lettere di M. Pietro Aretino, *u. s.*, ii. p. 242.

‡ Berni's Rime in Mazzucchelli, *u. s.*, p. 13.

§ Mazzucchelli, *u. s.*, pp. 14, 15.

with appropriate letter press, and these prints were considered even at the court of Clement to be so indecent that Marcantonio was thrown into prison, whilst Giulio escaped a similar fate by engaging his services to the Marquess of Mantua;* Aretino's share in the venture remained secret long enough to enable him to obtain for Marcantonio the protection of Cardinal Ippolito de' Medici, but then he also fell under suspicion and ran for Arezzo, from whence he made his way in 1524 to the camp of Giovanni de' Medici the great condottiere, whose only son became Duke of Florence.† The relations of Aretino to Giovanni de' Medici have been characterized with an openness which leaves nothing to be desired.‡ It is quite clear that he was Giovanni's private secretary from 1524 to 1526; that he came into familiar contact with Giovanni's friends, the Vitellis, the Roveres, Guicciardinis and Gonzagas; and that he became possessed of many of the secrets of these and other chiefs.§ He was useful as a despatch writer, and composed numerous letters, some of which have been published, and show that he managed the political business of his patron after he left the Imperialist to join the French cause, and take service in the Venetian army. Unluckily Giovanni de' Medici was wounded in an encounter with the Imperialists near Governolo, and carried to Mantua, where he died after

* Vasari, Life of Marcantonio, ix. p. 277.

† Mazzucchelli, p. 16, and Lettere di M. P. Aretino, i. p. 8.

‡ Compare Aretino to G. A. Boccamazza, in Lettere di M. P. Aretino, iii. 172.

§ Lettere Scritte a Pietro Aretino, first published by Marcolini in 1551. Edition of Landoni, 8vo, Bologna, 1873, pp. 1—8.

amputation on the 30th of December, 1526; Aretino found himself under the necessity of retiring to Venice, where he had no friends except those who might have known him as confidential servant to a captain in the service of the republic. But in this strait his good fortune did not desert him; acting on some secret recommendation, perhaps from the Duke of Urbino or the Marquess of Mantua, Andrea Gritti received and protected him, and as he himself confessed, "not only saved his honour but his life!"* But Aretino's gratitude did not prevent him from changing his colours. On the 25th of March he entered Venice.† On the 20th of May, after the sack of Rome, he offered his services to Charles the Fifth, and thus inaugurated that new form of life which he called "living by the sweat of his pen."‡ His familiar correspondence at this time proves that he was a pensioner on the bounty of the Marquis of Mantua, as well as a recipient of presents in money and clothes from individuals upon whom he had claims of some secret and unrevealed nature. But no doubt he was also in the pay of Gritti, who tried by his means to smooth the way to a reconciliation between Clement the Seventh and the Emperor. Gritti or the Marquis of Mantua, Sansovino or Sebastian del Piombo, may all or singly have led to Aretino's acquaintance with Titian. Assuredly Titian at this time had Aretino for a sitter, for he wrote in June, 1527, the following letter, which proves his intimacy with the secretary

* Lettere di M. P. Aretino, i. p. 3.

† Aret. to Cardinal Caracciolo in Lettere di M. P. Aret., i. p. 83.

‡ Aretino to Cusano, Lett. di M. P. Aretino, ii. p. 58.

of Giovanni de' Medici as well as his past friendship for Girolamo Adorno, who died ambassador to the Emperor at Venice on the 10th of March, 1523.*

TITIAN TO THE MARQUESS GONZAGA, AT MANTUA.

"EXCELLENT LORD:—Knowing your Excellency's love for painting and your passion for protecting it as shown in the patronage of Giulio Romano;—being further desirous of pleasing your Excellency,—I have taken the opportunity of Messer Pietro Aretino's arrival to paint his likeness, and as he comes—a second St. Paul—to preach the virtues of your Excellency, and I likewise know that you are fond of so faithful a servant because of his many virtues, I make you herewith a present of his portrait. But I also bear in remembrance the Signor Girolamo Adorno who adored the Marquis of Mantua, and as he was a qualified gentleman, I send your Excellency a present of him also. These may not be gifts worthy of so great a person as your Excellency, they may not be done by a master of sufficient skill, yet be pleased to accept the service of Titian, and cherish it till such time as I—according to the quality of my means—shall be able to send something that will satisfy and be acceptable to your Excellency, remembering that I always was and still am the servant of your Excellency, whose hand I beg to kiss.

"Most devoted servant,

"TITIANO VECELLIO.†

"From VENICE, *June* 22, 157.'

* Cicogna, Iscr. Ven., vi. 250.

† The original will be found in Appendix.

Aretino reached Venice, as we saw, in March. In less than three months he captivated Titian, sat to him, and materially affected his epistolary style. His knowledge of courts had taught him to flatter the self-love of princes, and he now imparted to Titian the secret of that flattery, subject to showing him later how the fruits of flattery might be garnered. The pictures and Titian's letters were both forwarded by Aretino to the Marquess, who thought fit to acknowledge the receipt in the two following epistles.

FEDERICO GONZAGA TO PIETRO ARETINO, AT VENICE.

"I received the two beautiful pictures of Titian which you sent by your servant. They are very dear to me; and quite as much so because of my wish to possess a work done by hands so clever as those of the excellent painter Titian as because one of them represents a man of your eminence; whilst, at the same time, I am enabled to contemplate the image of a person so dear to me as was of old Signor Hieronimo Adorno. Be good enough to thank Titian in my name, and give him to understand that I shall soon show the gratitude which I feel for so kind a demonstration.

"From MANTUA, *July* 8, 1527."

FEDERICO GONZAGA TO TITIAN, AT VENICE.

"M. TUCIANO—I received the two beautiful pictures which you were pleased to send as a present to me, and am very grateful for them, not only because I was most desirous of possessing works from such

skilful hands as yours, knowing as I do how clever you are in the art of painting, but because you send me portraits of two persons who were always and still are dear to me;—so like too that nature itself could not have made them more so; I therefore thank you, and shall hold these pictures dear for your sake; and you may be assured that nothing you could have done would have been more agreeable to me, or make me feel myself more under obligation. When I can I shall ever be ready to do you a pleasure, and always be disposed and inclined to consult your wishes.

"From MANTUA, *8th July*, 1527." *

Titian's Adorno and Aretino were lost, but the features of the latter were preserved in one of the canvases of Count Sebastian Giustiniani at Padua; and this remarkable piece may possibly be the original study for the portrait sent with such appropriate cunning to Mantua. Embrowned by age, and with fleshtints changed by time and repainting to a dark and dusky olive, the picture is so thoroughly injured that Count Giustiniani has catalogued it under Tintoretto's name. Yet it undoubtedly represents the features of Aretino as a young man, with a fine aquiline nose and a large open eye, in a dark pelisse and vest, and a pointed white collar visible beneath a black, but well-furnished beard, a bush of thick and curly hair showing off to advantage a round but rather narrow forehead. It would be presuming to assert that this is a genuine Titian, but the execution

* The originals of these two letters are in Appendix.

is apparently very careful; and the ruins may conceal traces of the hand of Vecelli, who was much more likely to paint the portrait of Aretino at an early age than Tintoretto, a child at the period under notice. Nor is it uninteresting to note that a print ascribed by Hollar to Titian, shows much the same head covered with a picturesque hat, the counterpart perhaps of one introduced by Vecelli in the Mantuan portrait.*

Titian and his new confederate had little patience to wait for the gratitude of the Marquis of Mantua. On the 6th of August, Aretino wrote to Federico Gonzaga, asking him to "bear in mind the promise made to Titian in respect of the portrait presented in the painter's name;"† and to this Federico replied in the following note:

FEDERICO GONZAGA TO PIETRO ARETINO, AT VENICE.

"I shall not forget to make some demonstration of my gratitude to Titian, so that he shall have reason to know what account I take of him, and how grateful I am to him.

"From MANTUA, 11*th of October*, 1527." ‡

Sansovino and Sebastian del Piombo were in Venice

* Hollar's print is a reversed copy of a copper plate by Marcantonio, preserved in a worn state in the Museum of Berlin. On what grounds Hollar ascribes the portrait to Titian it is hard to say. It looks like a copy from Giulio Romano, but bears the lines quoted at the opening of this chapter, and the words, "Titianus pinxit, V. Hollar fecit. 1647."

† Aretino to the Marquess of Mantua, Venice, Aug. 6, 1527, in Lettere di M. P. Aretino, i. p. 13.

‡ The original will be found in Appendix.

at the date of Aretino's last communication to the Marquess; and he did not fail to recommend them both in his letter—Sansovino as the sculptor of a lively Venus, Sebastian as capable of producing pictures "that should not represent anything holy." We see the tone of which the pitch notes were struck at Rome finds an echo at Venice. Aretino's correspondents form a circle of persons of quality whose morality is of a light and flimsy kind. He makes friends of artists whom he drags into the vortex of his dissipation. What he requires to repay attentions in the shape of purses, doublets, hats, or chains, is a portrait, a picture or a loose illustration. Titian occasionally furnishes the former, and more pliant artists the latter. Thus, whilst Titian paints the likeness sent by Aretino to the Marquess of Mantua, the work of a humbler craftsman requites the generosity of a less important patron; and in return for a present of a cap, a medal, and tags from Cesare Fregoso, Aretino sends a book of sonnets descriptive of designs which seem to differ in no way from those condemned at Rome by the policy of Clement the Seventh.* In this form of interchange all the parties concerned find their advantage, Aretino is paid for puffing princes; princes secure praise instead of satire from Aretino's pen; and artists become known through the scribe's exertions. Aretino, it may be, sat to Titian in the medalled cap of Fregoso; perhaps he wore a doublet made by

* Lettere di M. P. Aretino, i., p. 14.

Gonzaga's tailor. We regret that his portrait in its finished form should have perished.

Of the two great masters who took refuge at Venice in 1527, one only found encouragement to remain. Whilst Sebastian del Piombo, after a short stay, was induced to return to Rome, Sansovino received pressing invitations to proceed to Paris and take service with Francis the First;* but preferring a residence in Italy, he saw his patience at last rewarded by a permanent appointment. In 1529 Sansovino became architect of St. Mark at Venice; his intimacy with Titian and Aretino completed the "Triumvirate," which lasted for more than a quarter of a century.

In the meantime Titian kept up his connection with Alfonso of Este, and paid several visits to the Duke with the permission of Doge Gritti. The Ferrarese accounts register "15 lire to a *carrettiere*" for taking to Francolino on the 15th of January 1528, "Maestro Tutiano the painter who goes to Venice."† At a later season in the same year Tebaldi wrote to the Duke on the subject of Titian, who promised to sail for the Po with one Guglielmo sent by Alfonso to Venice to buy leopards; but he reported also that Titian complained of stingy treatment, having received no funds for the support of his family during his absence, or money for the purchase of clothes in which to appear at court. During his last stay at

* The proofs are in Temenza's Sansovino, p. 14, and Vasari, xiii., 81.

† Campori, Tiziano e gli Estensi, p. 19.

Ferrara, Titian added, he had painted three pictures, each of which was worth 100 ducats, and for these his Excellency's servants—for he could not blame his Excellency himself—had only given him 100 ducats in all. In January 1529, Titian was again at Ferrara, where his stay was only interrupted by a visit to Mantua. His diary, as noted in the Ferrarese day books, shows him to have been attended by no less than five persons, whose sustentation and wine rations are given for regular terms of days, from January 24 to February 27; and from April 20 to June 18.

As he left Ferrara for a fortnight at Mantua, Titian was the bearer of the following letter to Federico Gonzaga, which displays an amiable feeling towards the painter to which Alfonso's earlier correspondence has not accustomed us:—

ALFONSO D' ESTE TO THE MARQUESS OF MANTUA.

"Most illustrious and excellent Lord, honoured as a brother, Titian has been here for some days to do me a pleasure, and asks leave to visit Mantua on duty. Though unwilling to part with him, I have still considered the importance of the business which calls him to your Excellency, and wishing to do him service consistently with the great esteem in which I hold his talent, I have thought it well to give him these lines, by which I beg your Illustrious Lordship to consider him recommended not only for the love I bear him, but for the sake of the goodwill which I know your Lordship bears him also, and the favour which it will be to him without further intercession;

and the sooner your Excellency shall deign to send him back, the greater will be the obligation under which you will place myself and him. And I further beg to be recommended to your Excellency.

"ALFONSUS DUX FERRARIÆ.*

"FERRARA, 14*th of March*, 1529."

In a similar strain Alfonso was careful to express his gratitude to the Doge, for giving leave to the painter "who had served him admirably and well;" and Titian, who left Ferrara on the 18th of June, was made the bearer of a dispatch to that effect, addressed by the Duke to Andrea Gritti.† But before he started Titian, on his part, wrote a letter expressing his devotion to the Marquess of Mantua, and describing his impatience to be home in order to take in hand the work which he had pledged himself to perform.‡

Looking at the blanks and gaps which occur in the series of works produced by Titian at this period, we might almost conclude that all the pictures of the time were predestined to perish. In 1528, Matteo Palatini, a friend of the Vecelli of Cadore bequeathed a sum of money to his heirs for the purpose of founding a chapel in Zoppé, a village at the foot of the Pelmo.§ The chapel was built, and Titian painted an altar-piece in which he represented the Virgin and Child enthroned

* For this letter and the foregoing facts, Campori Tiziano e gli Estensi, pp. 19, 20.

† *Ib.* p. 19.

‡ See this letter, dated June 12, 1529, in Appendix.

§ 1528, not 1526 as Ticozzi states. Vite dei pittori Vecelli, p. 72; Matteo and not Giuseppe, as the same authority affirms. MS. Jacobi of Cadore.

between St. Joachim, and St. Jerom, and St. Anna in prayer at the foot of the throne. A traveller who should venture to climb the sides of the valley in which that Alpine village rests, would be rewarded now with a sight of this composition; but at an early part of the present century, an eager but injudicious patriot, who wished to defend the treasure of Zoppé from the plundering propensities of soldiers or thieves, rolled the canvas on a rough piece of deal, and when the danger was past, caused the picture to be restored by inexpert hands. The canvas suffered greatly from damp and repainting. The Virgin, who sits with the infant lying on her lap and stretching its hands up towards her, is disfigured by heavy spots in the face and hands; and her mantle has been changed from blue to black. St. Anna, who looks up in a beautiful, prayerful way, and joins her hands imploringly, sits in draperies bared almost to the thread of the cloth; and the saints who stand at her sides, though grand in shape and expression, are but the shadow of what they must once have been when first thrown upon the canvas.*

The labours which Titian devoted to his patrons at Ferrara, Mantua and Cadore were of less importance in these years than those which he spent on commis-

* The picture is on canvas, 4 ft. h. by 3. The throne, which rises above the Virgin's form, intercepts the sky, and is ornamented with caryatidæ. On the pedestal to the left of St. Anna's head, the scutcheon of the Palatini, nine white lilies on a field azure, is hung. The Virgin wears a white veil; St. Joachim an orange tunic and blue cloak. St. Jerom carries the book and hat, and is dressed in red, white, and green. But compare Ticozzi, Vecelli, pp. 72—73.

sions from religious corporations at Venice. One composition in particular, which he finished in 1530, absorbed his thoughts for a couple of years; and the tension which it caused was doubtless felt all the more because it was due to an active competition with two of the most dangerous rivals at that time in practice as painters at Venice. It is probable that no picture ever taxed the faculties of the master to such an extent as the "Peter Martyr" of San Giovanni e Paolo; but it is quite certain, on the other hand, that no picture more victoriously proved the superiority of his skill.

Amongst the older artists whose fame had been gradually increasing at Venice since the opening of the century, Palma Vecchio was the most prominent. His influence on Titian had been so powerful and so lasting, that it was not shaken off till after 1520. But in proportion as it waned, the friendship of the two painters appeared to cool; and they entered at last into a direct competition. Palma had had no share in the promotion which fell to the lot of Titian, but he had had powerful protectors amongst the Querini, the Priuli, and Cornari; and many persons at Venice probably thought his "Marriage of the Virgin" in Sant' Antonio, or the "Glory of St. Barbara" at Santa Maria Formosa, as fine as anything that Titian had done, except perhaps the Madonna of San Niccolò de' Frari, or the Madonna di Casa Pesaro. The brotherhood of St. Peter Martyr, whose altar stood in the church of San Giovanni e Paolo, were at all events unprepared to accept as paramount the

superiority of Titian over all his fellow painters, and being desirous to exchange an old altar-piece by Jacobello del Fiore for one of a more modern style, they invited all the artists then at Venice to send in designs for a picture to represent the death of Peter Martyr.*

Palma, Giorgione, and Titian himself had contributed, each in his peculiar sphere, to the formation of a younger talent, that of Pordenone. Early in 1528, when the brethren of St. Peter Martyr may be supposed to have published their intentions, Pordenone was employed by one of the Venetian brotherhoods in adorning the church of San Rocco. He was a great admirer of Titian, of whose works he had expressed the most favourable opinion; but he burned with desire to show that he too could paint a picture worthy of public admiration. These three artists—Titian, Palma, and Pordenone—entered the lists together; their sketches were exhibited for public approval, and Titian carried off the prize.† Palma did not live to witness the further triumph of his old friend and present antagonist. He died in the

* See the deed dated 1530 in Appendix, and compare Sansovino, Ven. desc. p. 65. Paolo Pino, Dialogo di Pittura, 8vo. Vinegia, 1548, p. 32; Ridolfi, Marav. i. 217, and Scanelli, Microcosmo, p. 217.

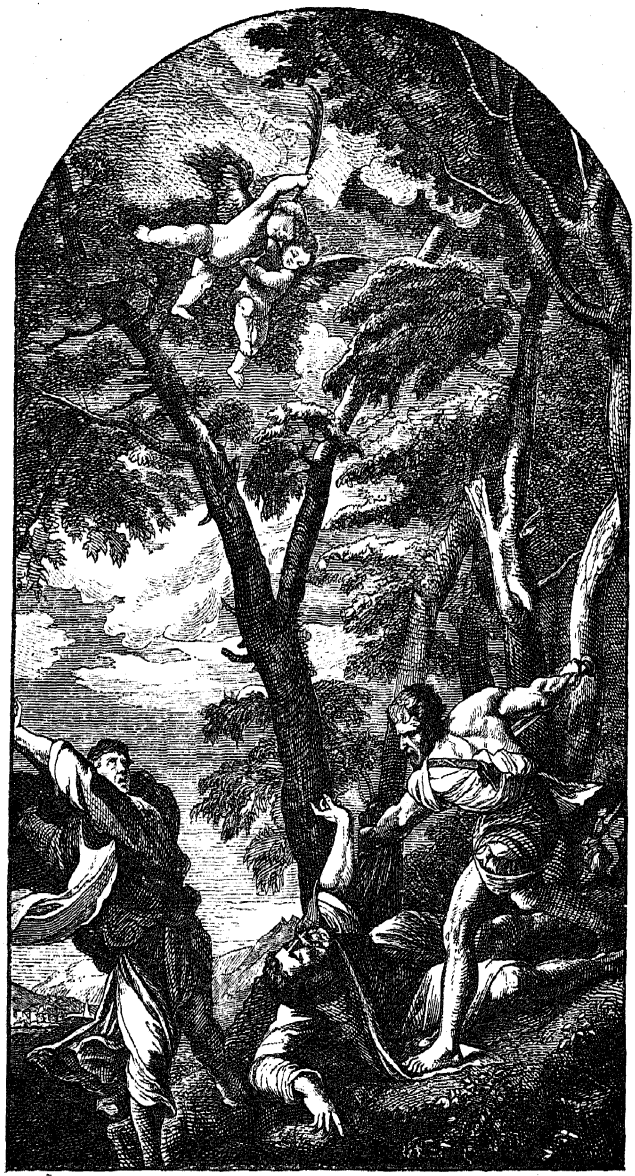
† Scanelli (Microcosmo, 217) says he saw the sketches in private hands at Bologna. Ridolfi (Marav. i. 217) saw that of Palma in the Contarini Palace (San Samuele) at Venice. As to the competition, Paolo Pino says, in his Dialogo di Pittura, printed in Venice in 1548 (p. 59), "Voglio che lui venghi al duello della concurrentia, e fare un opera per uno, ma con patto, che sia commessa la più perfetta, come già volse far Giacopo Palma con Titiano nell' opra de San Pietro Martire qui in Vinegia."

summer of 1528. Pordenone lived to nourish a deadly hatred against the man who beat him with the sketch of the Peter Martyr, and whom he failed to beat in a finished picture at San Giovanni Elemosinario. They came out still later socially and professionally as irreconcilable foes.

Titian took years to finish the "Peter Martyr;" he quarrelled with the brotherhood as to its price, but he delivered it at last, on the 27th of April, 1530, for a sum equivalent to that paid by the Bishop of Paphos for the "Madonna di Casa Pesaro."* During the time which elapsed between the completion of the design and the delivery of the completed picture, several circumstances combined to effect a change in the form of his art. In the first place Sebastian del Piombo took up his residence at Venice, where he stayed till March, 1529. In the next place Michaelangelo fled from Florence and spent some months at Venice in the autumn of 1529. The presence of Sebastian del Piombo and Buonarotti in a city where art had acquired a spirit so different from that of the Tuscans, could not fail to produce an extraordinary impression on Venetian painters. Sebastian was well acquainted with Titian, for both had been students in the same city from their earliest youth, and both were intimate with Aretino. Michaelangelo had been received on his way to Venice by Alfonso of Ferrara, and had publicly expressed to the Duke his admiration of Titian's skill.† Sebastian, whose pictorial career had

* See the payments from 1519 to 1526 in Appendix under 1519.

† Vasari xii. 210.



DEATH OF ST. PETER MARTYR.

FORMERLY IN SS. GIO. E PAOLO, VENICE.

[*To face p.* 329, *Vol. I.*

been altogether moulded during a long stay at Rome by Buonarotti, would alone have contributed to promote the study of design in a form unusual to the Venetians. He would be naturally enthusiastic of the beauties of the Sixtine chapel. It is conceivable that when the painter of that chapel appeared at Venice, he was received by his fellow craftsmen with the utmost distinction. The pictorial annals of Venice were so poorly kept, that they left this important matter in obscurity, but the "Peter Martyr" would alone suffice to demonstrate how deeply Titian was impressed with the grandeur of the Florentine's style; and we may note in this the origin of the feeling which prompted Tintoretto at last to write over the door of his workshop:

"Il disegno di Michelangelo, e il colorito di Tiziano."*

Titian once said to the Imperial envoy Vargas, "who saw him use a brush as big as a birch-broom, that he wished to paint in a manner different from that of Raphael or Michaelangelo, because he was not content to be a mere imitator."† In the Peter Martyr he proved his power to absorb and to assimilate what suited him in the style of Michaelangelo. He was Michaelangelesque without ceasing to be Titian, and this is a proof of the greatness of his genius.

The Martyrdom of St. Peter Martyr is still in the chapel of the Rosary at San Giovanni e Paolo. But

* Ridolfi, Marav., ii. 1741.
† Vicus, de Studiorum ratione, p. 100, in Cicogna's MS. Annot. to Tizianello's anon.

this picture which now adorns those walls is not that which Titian painted. After many mishaps and changes, having been taken to Paris and there transferred from panel to canvas, it was destroyed by fire on the 16th of August 1867, and in its stead there now hangs a copy by Cardi da Cigoli. The original picture lives in numberless imitations and innumerable prints, and more than all it lives in the memory of those who went to Venice for the sole purpose of seeing it, but the loss to art is still irreparable, because neither copy nor print can give an idea of a masterpiece that deserved to be called sublime. In this picture above all others Titian reproduced the human form in its grandest development, yet still within the limits which define nature as contradistinguished from the preternatural conventionalism of Michaelangelo. He took from Buonarotti indeed a startling display of momentary action and muscular strength. He set before his admirers the colossal forms of an herculean race, but he tempered every excess by a constant appeal to the reality, and he knew so well how to modify strain by balanced play of light and by gradation of tone that a natural effect was the necessary consequence. It seems almost useless labour to describe a work so familiar to every student of painting, but the process of description brings out points which escape an eye captivated by artifices of design and colour. The figures were placed on the verge of the plane of delineation inviting examination by their closeness as well as by their size. The saint lay prostrate on a grass-grown knoll,

his face turned upwards, his form partly raised on the right elbow and forearm, the right hand pointing to the Creed, the left outstretched towards heaven; over the prostrate martyr the hired murderer, with bronzed face and clotted hair, grasping at the saint's black mantle and treading on his dress as he dealt the final blow. To the left the saint's companion fled in an agony of fear, his head and scapular stained with blood, his legs and arms striding and tossing, his face turned back and blanched by terror, his eye fascinated by the dagger of the murderer; the limbs, the torso, in a momentary state of swing—foreshortened and muscular after the fashion of Buonarotti; to the right, in the distance of the glade, the suborner of the murder in armour on horseback, with a satellite hurrying from the scene of guilt. Combined with forms of athletic strength familiar to a hillsman, Titian set a landscape solemn in its gloom and grandeur, a landscape of tall and majestic trees, to the lofty summits of which "the last call of the Martyr and the shriek of his companion had room to rise."* To this landscape, on the verge of a forest in the higher regions of the Alps, a mountain distance of great remoteness was added,—a distance angrily coloured, but united with the foreground and sky by an enchanted effect of light, a lambent ray piercing the clouds perpendicularly to fall on the upturned face of the Martyr, to edge the frame of the flying friar and project on the head and shoulders of the murderer, playing brightly the

* Burchardt's Cicerone.

while on the floating shapes of two angels poised above the spot and looking down as they cheered the victim with the palm of martyrdom. Accompanying the gleam, a gust of wind seemed to flap the drapery, where it did not cling, into picturesque festoons. There was something too suggestive of the awful and supernatural in the cloud which rolled down into the trees, and either relieved their foliage or concealed them altogether, deepening here and there the darkness naturally falling on a glade, but partly lighted from the sun, yet still so ingeniously contrived as to leave broad masses of shadow and reflexions on large masses of the figures. Titian's taste, which urged him to imitate the simplicity of nature, was still far too refined to be satisfied with the commonplace realism of frocks and cowls. His friars were dressed in black mantles and white scapulars, but the robing was ideal or blown into motion with such skill as to look classic as the dress of an apostle in a cartoon by Raphael. But not the dress only, the faces were fine in their character and expression, that of the Martyr especially so, as he looked up to the sky heedless for ever of human pain and treachery, and the two winged boys in the air—marvels of life and motion—as charming singly as they were fine in joint grouping, their innocence and timidity being pitted in an admirable way against the ruthless action below. The assassin striding with his back to the spectator, was made to turn his head into strong profile, his movement strained no doubt, but true in the tension of the

muscles, and superb as a nude of clean limb and extremities. Nothing technically recalled the pains or minutiæ of execution, for all was lost in a general breadth concealing the contours in the rounding of the flesh. A masterpiece of colouring, the picture was remarkable for nothing more than that it was executed with primaries, a single patch only—that of the red hose worn by the executioner—being thrown in to vary the blacks and whites of the Dominican's draperies, and the deep browns and greens of the trees and foreground. When Titian first composed the solitary group which made up this grand picture, he thought of nothing more than the chief episode. In a splendid sketch for the murderer and his victim once possessed by Mr. Sackville Bale, the saint is represented on the ground, and lying there with both his hands before him, and his glance directed towards the assassin.*

The Martyr's appeal to heaven, and the opening of the sky in the picture, thus appears to have been an afterthought. Critics of various ages reproved the unnatural movement of the body in the murderer and his victim, and there was certainly room for the criticism; but here, as in the "Entombment," the weaker points were concealed in the grandeur of the whole,

* The drawing of Mr. Bale belonged previously to Dr. Wellesley at Oxford. There is another drawing of the whole composition in the British Museum, with one angel in the air. The robe of the Martyr, the hands of the fugitive friar are not disposed as they were in the picture. A drawing of a like composition is in the Berlin Museum, whither it came from the Suermondt Collection, but it is not by Titian. Sketches for the angels and other figures in the Lille Museum are photographed by Braun.

and enthusiasm left no room for moderate fault-finding. Dolce opened his Dialogue on Painting by bringing Aretino and Fabrini into converse before the Peter Martyr of Titian.* Generations of artists, from Benvenuto Cellini and Tribolo in the sixteenth to Rubens and the Caracci in the seventeenth, and Reynolds in the eighteenth century, spent hours admiring and studying it; and it is variously reported that the Signoria threatened with the penalty of death any person who should have the audacity to move it.† We cannot wonder that on the eve of its exhibition, Pordenone should have resolved to abandon the field occupied by so powerful an adversary, and that Sebastian del Piombo should have thought of Rome as better suited than Venice to his form of artistic skill. A deed has been preserved under date of April 27, 1530, in which the contract originally drawn up between Titian and the brotherhood of San Giovanni

* Dolce, Dialogo, p. 1.

† Compare Boschini (Navegar Pittoresco, p. 12), who ascribes the severity of the Signoria to an offer made by Daniel Nys to buy the picture for 18,000 scudi, with St. Disdier (*u. s.* p. 56), who states that in consequence of the practice of spunging, frequently indulged by student copyists, the panel lost its colour. That it was frequently restored is clear from the exhaustive narrative of Zanotto in the Pinacoteca Veneta.

A copy by Cigoli, once in the Uffizi, was noted in the text. Another of very respectable age is on the first altar to the right after entering the high portal of San Domenico of Ancona. The "Finished Study," belonging to Mr. Pigott, exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1875, canvas 36 in. by 23 in., if it be the same picture, numbered 249 at Manchester, and then the property of the heirs of J. Smith Pringle, Bart., is a copy. We note in the inventory of Rubens' pictures "a great draught of the Martirdome of Peter Martyr, by Titian" (Sainsbury, *u. s.* 236), but what became of it is not at present known. See the engravings of Martin Rota, G. B. Fontana, Le Fèbre, and Patina.

e Paolo is set forth. It shows that differences as to payment arose between the painter and the guardian of the convent; but it also shows that Titian had finished the altar-piece some time before, and found leisure to turn his attention to other works.*

Meanwhile, events were taking place in Central Italy which indirectly were of influence in moulding Titian's career. Clement the Seventh left Rome in October, 1529, on a progress to Bologna, and Charles the Fifth came from Spain by way of Genoa to meet him. There the pacification of Italy was obtained at the expense of Italian liberties. The Medici bought the lordship of Florence; the Emperor received the crown from the Pope's hand; and the patrons of Titian, Federico Gonzaga and Alfonso d' Este worshipped the "rising sun" of Germany and Spain. In the midst of the festivities which half concealed the passions and intrigues of statesmen and princes, there is a vague tradition that Titian was invited to appear. It would have been strange had he been asked to Bologna at the opening of the conferences which were to decide whether Venice should remain at war with the Emperor or not;—less strange had he been sent for after the ratification of peace on Christmas Eve of 1529. The Marquess of Mantua, Titian's staunch friend, was a constant attendant on the Emperor during the whole of his stay in the pontifical states, and it might be supposed that he would be the first to bring together the monarch and

* See Appendix.

the artist; but, curiously enough, historians do not connect Titian with the Gonzagas on this occasion, and his meeting with the Emperor is ascribed to the mediation of Aretino. "It is said," writes Vasari,* "that Charles the Fifth being at Bologna in 1530, was sent for by Cardinal Ippolito de' Medici at Aretino's suggestion; and there he produced a magnificent portrait of his Majesty in complete armour, which so pleased the Emperor that he sent the master a thousand scudi, which however he had to share with Alfonso Lombardi." If we should doubt the correctness of Vasari in reference to this story, it would be not only because the facts are not confirmed by authentic records, but because there are proofs of Titian's presence elsewhere than at Bologna in the first months of 1530.

Whilst the painter was settling his quarrel with the brotherhood of San Giovanni e Paolo at Venice, he was busy with commissions for the Marquess of Mantua, of which the following letters give sufficient intelligence.

GIACOMO MALATESTA TO FEDERICO GONZAGA AT MANTUA.

"Titian has shown me the pictures which he is painting for your Lordship. That of the 'Madonna with St. Catharine' and another of nude females are much advanced. The first he promised to deliver at the beginning of Lent, the second at Easter. That of the bathing women is merely designed. The other

* Vasari, xiii., 29, 30.

representing the person of your Lordship in armour is in good part finished.

"From VENICE, *Feb.* 5, 1530." *

Three pieces, it thus appears, were on the painter's easel at one time, the portrait of the Marquess, which perished, but of which Vasari said it was life itself,† the "Virgin and St. Catharine," which probably went with it to Mantua before Easter, and the "Nude Women Bathing" which was not ready till Midsummer.

On the 3rd of March, Titian wrote to the Marquess to excuse himself for not sending the latter; and acknowledged a donation which—it subsequently comes out—was no less than a benefice for his son Pomponio:

TITIAN TO FEDERICO GONZAGA AT MANTUA.

"Illustrious and most excellent Lord and patron, I have heard by letter from Count Niccola of the gift and present which your Excellency has condescended with habitual grace and liberality to make in my favour. For these I beg to tender infinite thanks, attributing this great reward to the infinite [blank in original] which I have with your Lordship. I would beg your Excellency to be content to advise the officials in time in order that the matter may be settled without further troubling your Excellency,

* The original is in the Appendix.

† Vasari, xiii., 31. The portrait was in the Palace of Mantua, according to one of the inventories of the Gonzaga Collections, as late as 1627. (Darco, Delle Arti di Mantova, ii., 159.)

and, having taken possession, I shall promise to satisfy my debt,* and should not like to fail in paying it or break my word. Of this I also write to the Signor Count, as your Excellency may ascertain from himself.

"I should have ere this furnished your Excellency's picture of the 'Nude Women,' but that I have such irritation of the skin that I cannot move. I hope within a fortnight, or at Shrovetide, to give it to your Excellency, whose hands I beg with all my heart to kiss, and to whom I wish myself constantly recommended.

"Your Excellency's devoted servant,

"TICIANO, PITTORE.†

"From VENICE, *March* 3, 1530."

The portrait of Federico found a worthy place in the "camera dell' arma," in the Marquess's palace. It hung in noble company with a picture by Giulio Romano, Del Sarto's copy of Raphael's "Leo the Tenth," and Raphael's portrait of the Marquess as a boy.‡

The "Virgin and St. Catherine," which may be identified as the "Madonna del Coniglio" at the Louvre, is a masterpiece in which Titian substitutes for the wilds of Bethlehem the lovely scenery of the Isonzo and Tagliamento. He represents the Virgin seated on the grass with her hand on a white rabbit, and St. Cathe-

* We shall see there was a pension payable out of the benefice to an earlier holder.

† The original will be found in Appendix.

‡ Calandra to Federico Gonzaga at Casale from Mantua, Oct. 28, 1531, in Pungileoni, Elogio Storico di Rafaello Santi, 8vo., Urbino, 1829, p. 182.

rine by her side stooping with the infant Christ in her arms to look at the rabbit: a charming group in the corner of a landscape—a group on which all the light of the picture is concentrated, whilst the broad expanse behind with the wooded farmstead in its right, the distant village, the chain of hills and the far-off mountains lost in blue haze, lies dormant under the shade of a summer cloud. St. Catherine and the Virgin are both portraits, the first a queen in the rich ornament of pearls that decorates her luxuriant hair, the silken scarf that covers her neck, her white silk puffs and armlets, and her striped orpiment dress; the Virgin in traditional red and blue, her sandaled foot near a round basket in which some apples lie. As St. Catherine stoops to the Virgin she holds the infant Christ in a muslin cloth, and the child looks half merrily, half slyly at the rabbit, catching at the Saint's face to make sure of near support, and making signs of half distress with one of its hands. In the background near a hut St. Joseph fondles a black lamb that has straggled from the neighbouring flock. Bunches of flowering weeds, a pumpkin, grace the foreground, and on the broken wheel at Catherine's feet we read Ticianus, F.

Palma has made us acquainted with varied manifestations of homely feeling in his "Holy Conversations." Titian watches life with an equal and yet more sensitive insight, refining upon that which is merely familiar by bringing before his admirers figures which they revere, in the sweetest and most graceful converse. Truth as displayed in nature is

put before us with such singular elevation, in a medium so enchanting from its tone and air and vegetation, that it vies with the more severe sublimity of works embodying the highest ideals of form. Combinations of strength and tenderness, of colour and transparence, of polished blending and grain, of vivid tint and atmosphere, are all to be found in one picture in which, at the same time, there is a delicacy of feeling full of pathos.* We ask ourselves indeed when looking at the "Madonna del Coniglio," whether an artist with only fleeting ties could have created such a masterpiece; and the answer seems to be that nature here gushes from the innermost recesses of a man's heart who has begun to know the charms of paternity, who has watched a young mother and her yearling child, and seized at a glance those charming but minute passages which seldom or ever meet any but a father's eye.

Titian we know had a wife. Her name was Cecilia; and we are able to compute that about the year 1525 she gave birth to Titian's scapegrace son Pomponio.† The joys of which we here find a trace

* This picture, No. 459 at the Louvre, belonged to Louis the Fourteenth. It is on canvas, m. 0.70 h. by 0.84, and with figures half the size of life. It is engraved in Filhol and in Landon; but there is a fine photograph of it by Adolphe Braun of Dornach.

† See proofs of Titian's marriage to D[onna] Cecilia in a declaration of the Court of Intestates at Venice on the 23rd of October, 1576, published in Cadorin's Dello Amore, &c., p. 95. Compare Aretino to Pomponio, Venice, Nov. 26, 1537, in Lettere di M. Pietro Aretino, *u. s.*, p. 204, verso, in which Pomponio is stated to be 12 years old. We shall see that Titian lost his wife in 1530. Ticozzi's error in calling her Lucia, the name of Titian's mother, may be noted. That she bore Titian

were vouchsafed to the painter more than once between that date and his wife's death in 1530.

The "Madonna del Coniglio" was never copied. It remained an *unicum*. Its counterpart in homely attraction—the "Virgin's Rest in Egypt"—was produced about the same time, and often repeated. *Editio princeps* is the Louvre example, where the Virgin is seated under a tree to the left, and supports the child on her lap as the boy St. John comes forward with his lamb, and St. Joseph contemplates the scene. In the distance a servant leads the ox and ass, and two angels in the air carry the cross. The landscape background is full of colour.* A good school replica in the Holford Gallery in London is preferable to the coarser and later one of the Friulan School in the Royal Institution at Liverpool.† A cold but careful copy in the Museum of Modena bears the master's name with less claim to the honour than a replica of the sixteenth century, in the Escurial.‡ Two later

a daughter, who died early, is known. See Zanetti, *Pittura Ven.*, *u. s.* p. 746, and Ticozzi, Vecelli, p. 28.

* This canvas, No. 461 at the Louvre, and in size m. 0.81 h. by 1.08, belonged to Mazarin, and was bought of the Cardinal's heirs for Louis the Fourteenth. (See Villot's Catalogue.) It is engraved in Filhol and Landon. Photograph by Braun.

† The replica in the Holford Gallery was in the Orleans Collection, and belonged to Mr. Walton and Mr. Wilkins before it was bought by Mr. Holford. It is much injured by re-painting. Compare Waagen's Treasures, ii., pp. 197 and 497.

The copy at Liverpool, No. 89 of the Catalogue, is 2 ft. 11 in. high by 4 ft. 1 in. The figures are large and weighty, as they would naturally be if copied by one familiar with the manner of Pordenone; and the general tone somewhat merges into a ruddy brown.

‡ The copy at Modena is in the Museum, but not numbered; it belongs to the Modena Academy of Arts. The replica at the Escurial is of Titian's own time.

adaptations are in the galleries of Stockholm and Berlin.*

Titian was still at work completing pictures for the Gonzagas when the conferences of Bologna broke up. On the 23rd of March, 1530, the Emperor rode north with his suite. On the 31st the Pope bestrode his mule and started for Rome. The pageantry was over, the princes were gone, and the nobles dwelt complacently on the splendour of the past festivity, whilst the people breathed again when freed from the burden of De Leyva's soldiery. Amongst the palaces which shone with more than usual brilliancy during this memorable winter, that of the Pepoli had been very remarkable. Charles the Fifth had frequently accepted Count Pepoli's hospitality, and Covos, his chief political secretary, had seen and admired the Countess's maid in waiting, Cornelia. Here was an opportunity for influence not to be neglected. The Marquess of Mantua watched with interest the love affair of Covos and Cornelia, and determined at all hazards to secure imperial interest, by flattering the secretary's passion. To this end he sent Titian and Giov. Bologna to take the likeness of the lady, with a view of presenting her in painting and statuary to Covos. In June, Titian had written to Isabella d'Este to announce the near

* The Stockholm copy, No. 1060 of the Museum Catalogue, is more modern than any of the foregoing, yet is still registered as an original Titian.

No. 203 at the Berlin Museum is a hard copy, remarkable for studies of flowers, the tree to the left being in bloom, and the rock behind the boy Baptist decorated with the leaves and blossoms of a gigantic convolvulus. On the foreground to the left an ewe is standing.

completion of a travelling altar-piece.* In the first days of July he came to Bologna, with a letter of introduction to the Countess Pepoli, in which the Marquess described him generously as a rare and excellent painter, and a gentleman for whom he begged facilities for taking the portrait of the lady Cornelia.† On a similar errand the sculptor Bologna had been sent a few days before, and great was his anger as he met Titian at the door, and learnt the cause of his visit.‡ Writing to the Duke on the 11th of July, Bologna said, "he had heard from His Excellency that it was intended that he should portray 'la Cornelia.' He was in bed at the time, but had risen and taken horse, and gone to the house of the lady Isabella Pepoli, where he met Titian, who told him he had been sent by my Lord to do that which he, Bologna, came also to do, whereupon he, Bologna, had withdrawn, calling Titian to witness that he had a swollen cheek, and that his teeth chattered with a fever caught days before in the damp rooms of the palace of Té." §

Next day, July the 12th, Titian wrote also to record a failure.

TITIAN TO FEDERICO GONZAGA AT MANTUA.

"The lady Cornelia is no longer in Bologna. She

* Titian to Isabella, from Venice, June 30, 1530 (Pungileoni, in Giornale Arcadico, fol., Rome, tom. li., 1831).

† Federico Gonzaga to Elizabetta, Countess Pepoli, from Mantua, July 8, 1530, in Gaye, Carteggio, 8vo, Firenze, 1840, ii., p. 219.

‡ Federico Gonzaga to Francesco Bologna, from Mantua, July 6, 1530, in Gaye, *u. s.*, ii., 220.

§ See Appendix.

has been sent away for change of air to Nuvolara, being ill and out of condition. Hearing this, I fancied I should do little good, the lady having been sick, and I for my part being affected by the great heat, so being unwilling to become altogether indisposed, have gone no further with my work. But the lady impressed me so much from the first with her beauty that I have the greatest desire to portray her, and I am sure that those who know her will think I painted her frequently, and I beg your Excellency to leave the matter to me, and in ten days, if I have sent to me to Venice the portrait which was done by *that other* painter of Cornelia, I shall send both it and mine to your Excellency, and comparison will show how anxious I am to serve your Excellency in this as in everything else so long as I live. Should your Excellency after seeing the portrait think that it requires alteration, I shall go with pleasure to Nuvolara to alter it, but I do not think that will be required."*

During the master's absence, the Marquess had written to Agnello at Venice to prepare a present of 100 scudi for him.† On the 15th of July, Agnello announced Titian's return sick to Venice, and a payment to him of 78½ scudi.‡

Titian's life at this period excites none of the interest which clings to that of Michaelangelo. Whilst Florence is wrestling with fate and fighting against treachery, with Buonarotti on the side of the patriots,

* See Appendix.

† See the letter, dated July 8, 1530, in Appendix.

‡ See Appendix.

Venice stands still and watches with feline cunning the triumph of Imperialism, her greatest master being busied with nothing more than portraits of ladies and pictures of female nudes. But if Titian's figure is absent from the great drama of politics, it does not pass through the days unscathed by private trouble. We saw him at Bologna sickening at the heat of an Italian summer. He returned to Venice, and there the great bereavement of his life fell upon him. Cecilia, the wife who had borne him Pomponio, Orazio, and Lavinia, was struck down, and he buried her with a mournful heart on the 5th of August. The friends of his house gathered round it at this juncture, and condoled with the painter, and one of them, Benedetto Agnello, the agent of his patron Federico Gonzaga, wrote to the warder of Mantua:

"Our master Titian is quite disconsolate at the loss of his wife, who was buried yesterday. He told me that in the troubled time of her sickness he was unable to work at the portrait of the lady Cornelia or at the picture of the '*Nude*' which he is doing for our most illustrious Lord; but he thinks the latter will be a fine thing, and he hopes to finish it before the month is out. Meanwhile he desires to know how his Lordship likes the 'St. Sebastian' lately sent to him, which he admits is but an ordinary performance as compared with the *nudes*, and one which he only produced as an entertainment in token of the devotion which he feels for his Excellency." *

* See Appendix. Of the "nudes" we hear no more, nor do we know what became of them.

The "St. Sebastian" we observed was but a copy of that which, ten years before, Titian had painted for the legate Averoldo.* It was speedily followed by the portrait of Cornelia, the despatch of which to Covos was announced in the following letter:

FEDERICO GONZAGA TO SIGISMUNDO DELLA TORRE.

"The muleteer of M. Antonio Bagarotti left this day with the arms which we are sending to Don Petro de la Cavena, and the portrait of 'La Cornelia' for the 'Sior Commendador Maior' (Covos.)

"From MANTUA, 26*th of September*, 1530." †

The house of the painter was thrown into disarray by the death of the matron who presided over it. There were young children there who required attendance and care. Titian, in this strait, asked his sister Orsa to take charge of his household, and she soon joined him from Cadore.‡ He also felt the irksomeness of living in the old dwelling of San Samuele, and sighed for purer air and more open country; and before long he hired a lodging in the northern suburbs, where he laid out a garden famous in after years for the beauty of its site and the company which occasionally met there.§

But in the midst of his family troubles Titian did not forget his worldly interests. Since he had become the father of a family he had often thought of the

* See *antea*, p. 253.
† See the original in Appendix.
‡ Ciani, Storia del Popolo di Cadore, ii., 322.
§ See *postea*, and Cadorin's Dello Amore, p. 83.

best means for securing to them a respectable competence. Orazio, it had been determined, should follow the profession of his father. Pomponio was to enter the church; and this was the more natural as Titian already had a promise of a benefice for the boy. In September, 1530, Agnello reports Titian's desire to obtain possession of the promised sinecure:

BENEDETTO AGNELLO TO JO. JACOMO CALANDRA AT MANTUA.

"Some days have elapsed since I saw Titian, but from what I hear, his health is not yet completely restored. On paying him a visit a few days ago, he told me his cure would be hastened if he received intelligence that our Signor had given him possession of the benefice of Medole. He thinks the pleasure of this news would be very great, his present indisposition being simply due to melancholy.

"From VENICE, *Sept.* 27, 1530."*

Relying on Federico's promise, Titian had put his son into a clerical dress, and in this way openly advertised his good fortune to his friends, but the promise was still delayed, so long delayed indeed, that the painter's health improved without the cure he longed for.

BENEDETTO AGNELLO TO JO. JACOMO CALANDRA AT MANTUA.

"M. Titian is beginning to resume strength, and will soon leave for Mantua. He has had a letter from

* The original in Appendix.

the Signor Count Niccola (? patron of the benefice of Medole), but not being in a condition to write at the time, he gave no answer.

"From VENICE, *October* 4, 1530." *

BENEDETTO AGNELLO TO FEDERICO GONZAGA AT MANTUA.

"M. Ticiano and Sansovino are looking out for a man who can do foundry work. They will let me know when they find anything suitable.

"From VENICE, *October* 24, 1530."

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

"M. Tiziano tells me he has found a man who can do foundry work admirably, and is also a fair sculptor. He thinks this man will suit, and willingly take service with your Excellency. So soon as he shall have spoken with the man, he will give me the answer, and I shall report to your Illustrious Lordship.

"From VENICE, *Oct.* 30, 1530." †

In the meanwhile Titian was labouring to give his Mantuan patron proofs of his diligence. The despatch of a "St. Jerom" to Federico, was acknowledged in a kind letter of March 5, 1531, in which a request was made for a "Magdalen" "as beautiful but as tearful as possible." The picture was one in which the Marquess and his mother were both interested, as it was intended for a present to Davalos del Vasto, at that time high in favour with Charles the Fifth.

* The original in Appendix. † The originals in Appendix.

The progress of this work, upon which Titian expended more than usual pains, is illustrated in numerous letters which passed between the Marquess and his agent Agnello in March and April. On the 14th of April both Titian and the Mantuan envoy were able to announce the sending of the picture, and Federico acknowledged his obligations in the kindest words.*

The "Magdalen" pleased the Gonzagas so much that they obtained a copy of it. When Daniel Nys carried off the Mantuan Collection to Venice a Magdalen by Titian formed part of it.† But it may be that Charles the First only received a later adaptation, of which the original was sent to Davalos. The general was certainly acquainted with Titian at this time, and he begged Aretino, in November, to ask him to head quarters at Correggio, adding that the steps of the master would not be taken in vain.‡ Whether Titian had previously painted a "Magdalen" it is hard to say. The subject was one to which he was partial, and he was once heard to boast that he made upwards of 2000 scudi by it,§ but it is difficult to tell when he

* For these letters, dated March 5, 18, 19, 22, and April 8, 12, 14, and 28, see the Appendix; and consult Gaye, Carteggio, i., 223; and Pungileoni, in Giornale Arcadico for 1831.

† Compare Bathoe's Catalogue and Sainsbury Papers, illustrative of Sir P. P. Rubens, p. 336. But it is well to note that the Mantuan inventory of the year 1627 only registers a copy of Titian's "Magdalen" (see Darco, Delle Arti, p. 156). Charles I.'s Catalogue, however, describes the "Magdalen" as an original Titian.

‡ Lettere scritte a P. Aretino, p. 109.

§ Francesco di Pietro Morosini, Duke of Candia, from Candia, 1601, to F. Lollino at Venice, relating the purchase of a "Magdalen" of Titian (Cicogna, Isc. Ven., v. 46).

composed the first example, and equally so to discover what became of del Vasto's copy. The earliest extant representation of the Magdalen was probably done for Francesco Maria, Duke of Urbino. It is now at the Pitti, and displays a beauty of such uncommon order as to deserve all the encomiums which can be given to it. But it also bears obvious marks of the haste with which it was executed; and tells of itself the tale of its production. Titian was evidently asked to paint quickly a picture of effect. He chose the smooth surface of a panel, upon which he threw the naked form of a young woman of twenty-five, whose full shape and bright flesh are partially decked by golden tresses that fall copiously down her shoulders; a pair of beautiful rounded arms and delicate taper fingers press the locks to the bosom and waist, leaving bare the throat and breasts. The upturned face and eyes, and the tears which drop down the cheeks, are emblems of a penitence which the forms belie. It is clear that Titian had no other purpose in view than to represent a handsome girl. He displays all his art in giving prominence to her shape. Her skin glows uniformly between the metallic reflexions of her gilt hair, it shines brightly in front of a dark hill to the right, the brown back of which is broken with mysterious greys. It shines with equal clearness before the deep enamel blue of an Italian sky, blotched with pearly cloud, and verging towards the horizon on a misty range of mountains. The model of the girl is the Venus of the Shell, but it is a model which Titian designed from memory, and not

from life, a lovely conventional being, equally brilliant and unreal, but a creation which no master less able than Titian could have produced.* The friends of this form of art were at all times so numerous that copies could not be made fast enough for them, but the copies were not executed by Titian, seldom even by his immediate disciples; and the best of them in the Doria Palace at Rome is but a school-piece, whilst a replica in the same collection, and repetitions at Hampton Court, are quite unworthy of Titian's name.†

Not less difficult to find than the "Magdalen" is the "St. Jerom" of the Gonzagas. The wild scenery of Friuli, with its growth of oak and pine intermingled with rocks and grassy banks, or netted with gnarled roots, was altogether suited to Titian's idea of the retreat of a saint whose familiar companion was the lion. In pictures and engravings the man is variously occupied; pensive, penitent, despairing, or in prayer; the landscape is always imposing by its severity and

* This panel, No. 67 at the Pitti, belonged in Vasari's time to the collection of the Dukes of Urbino. It is 1 braccio 9 high, by 1, 3, 4, browned by age and varnishes, the latter concealing a few small retouches, one of which is on the forehead. On the vase to the left we read, "TITIANVS." The figure, a half-length, is turned to the right. See Vas., xiii., 32.

† The best of the two copies in the Doria Palace is the canvas numbered 56 in the large room of the "braccio secondo." A white drapery, which covers some of the forms, is obviously a modern improvement, and the flesh is in many places re-painted. The same addition of drapery will be found in the second copy, No. 37, of the second room at the Doria Palace, a copy inferior in every respect to No. 56. Both examples are under Titian's name. A poor copy of the Pitti "Magdalen" is in the Prince of Wales' Presence Chamber at Hampton Court; it is disfigured by the addition of new canvas all round. Another but feebler copy is in Queen Mary's Closet, also at Hampton Court.

effective lighting. In the Louvre we see St. Jerom, old, bearded, and kneeling, but glaring at a crucifix fastened to the trunk of a tree, the stone in his hand, the cardinal's hat on the ground, a red cloth covering his loins, and a weird light filtering through the trees. The grand breadth of the treatment and the richness of the tones indicate the time with which we are now busied; and there is evidence in replicas or varieties once at Garscube, Chatsworth, and elsewhere that Titian's pupils and copyists had a large demand even at this period for a subject greatly favoured by fashion.* If Titian had taken half as much pains to

* The "St. Jerom" at Mantua was hung in the rooms of the Marchioness Isabella. See Calandra to Federico, in Pungileoni's Raphael, p. 182. The "St. Jerom" of the Louvre, numbered 466, measures m. 0.80 in. high, and 1.02 in. broad, and is on canvas: it was probably a Mantuan piece, and was purchased in the time of Louis XIV. It is engraved in Landon. At Garscube, seat of Sir A. Campbell, the "St. Jerom" is with slight variety a repetition of the canvas at the Louvre. Though catalogued as Titian, it shows few, if any, marks of his hand, being so extensively repainted as to display quite a modern appearance. At the Duke of Devonshire's seat, Chatsworth, the saint is also represented of a larger size than the two foregoing, but on panel. He kneels turned to the right, with the stone in his right and a finger of his left on a book resting near the crucifix on a rock. At the foot of the latter the lion advances. This picture is not treated with the mastery of Titian, and seems the work of a pupil in Titian's shop. A "St. Jerom" in the same attitude as that of the Louvre, is catalogued as a Titian in the Balbi Collection at Genoa, but is only a feeble copy. A small and clever reproduction of "St. Jerom," penitent, kneeling in a wilderness with the crucifix in the distance to the right, and a landscape of trees and hills, is that which was once catalogued in the Northwick Collection as a Titian. It is a small panel, 2 ft. long by 1 ft. 8 in. wide, with the saint in the same action as that of the Louvre; but the execution is that of Romanino. Two small pictures, Nos. 478 and 492, in the Madrid Museum, represent St. Jerom; the first is by Lotto, the second by a later Venetian.

teach Pomponio his own art as he did to procure for him a succession of sinecures, he would have done better for his boy and enjoyed a happier old age. But he was doubtless at this time under the influence of Aretino, who lived by begging when not engaged in extortion; and Aretino would naturally make it clear to his understanding that a benefice in the name of Pomponio would yield an income for some years to Pomponio's father. There is something painfully comic in the letters in which Titian treats of these matters bartering his skill as a painter for the fat returns of a Lombard curacy.

"I have been expecting," he writes on the 12th of July, 1531, to the Duke of Mantua, "the bull of the benefice of Medole which your Excellency gave me for my son Pomponio last year, and seeing that the matter is delayed beyond measure, and what is worse, that I have not received the income of the benefice—I find myself in a state of great discontent. It would," he adds, "be greatly to my dishonour and infamy, if my boy should be forced to change the priest's dress, which he wears with so much pleasure, after all Venice has been made acquainted with the gift made to him of this benefice by your Excellency."* A fortnight more and Titian's note is changed. He is very humble and thankful, for the Duke has written to say that the benefice and its income are his; and he congratulates his Grace upon his coming marriage, and kneels to the ground and kisses his hands,

* The original, published by Pungileoni in the Giornale Arcadico for 1831, is reprinted in Cadorin, Dello Amore, p. 37.

assuring him of his readiness to obey all his behests.*

On the 7th of September Agnello reports the delivery of the bull of the benefice to Titian.

BENEDETTO AGNELLO TO FEDERICO GONZAGA.

"I have given the bulls to M. Titiano, whose joy at receiving them could not have been greater. I pressed him to proceed with the pictures which he owes to your Excellency, and he promised to finish them immediately."

Titian's duties in 1531 were multifarious. Besides painting and performing commissions for the Gonzagas in October and November,† he worked diligently for the public requirements of the Doge Gritti, whilst not the least portion of his time was devoted to forwarding the private interests of Aretino. There were three persons at this period whose favour was of the utmost concern to this grasping man, the Doge, the Duke of Mantua, and Francesco Sforza Duke of Milan. The bounties of the two first were distributed through their agents at Venice; those of Sforza under the superintendence of Maximian Stampa, an imperialist partisan in command of the castle of Milan. In

* See the letters in Appendix, Pungileoni and Cadorin having only given an extract. The Duke of Mantua was married to the heiress of Montferrat at Casale, in Oct. 1531. (B. Arelio to Aretino in Lettere, sc. a P. A. *u. s.*, ii. p. 170.)

† See for some of these commissions a letter of Titian to the Duke of Mantua of October 29; and another from Agnello to Calandra, of Nov. 30, in Appendix.

return for most substantial marks of Stampa's favour, Aretino in October sent that captain a gem cut by Luigi Anichini and a boy Baptist by Titian, and in the letter accompanying the presents, he particularly dwelt on "the beautiful curl of the Baptist's hair, the fairness of his skin, the richness of his crimson tunic lined with lynx, and the deceptive beauty of the lamb which had caused a sheep to bleat."* That Titian should furnish such morsels as these for the hungry maw of his confederate without requiring some form of requital was not to be expected. It may have been at Aretino's suggestion that Titian was subsequently employed to paint Stampa's likeness, and the portraits of the hunch-backed Sforza, and the infant bride which the policy of Charles the Fifth gave him in 1534. There are traces of all these works in the pages of history though none of them were preserved to our day.† But independent of this, Aretino knew how to repay favours by judicious flattery; and there is nothing more ingenious than the way in which he brings up

* Lettere di M. P. Aretino, i. p. 24.

† Stampa's likeness was seen by Vasari (xiii. 38), Sforza's by Vasari (xiii. 38) and Lomazzo (Trattato della pittura, fol., Milan, 1585, p. 633). Cristina of Denmark was twelve years old when she was married to Francesco Sforza (Lanz. Correspondence of Charles V., ii. 87, 89, and 206). Her portrait was painted by Titian after her marriage in January, 1534 (See Guido Mazenta to the Grand Duke Ferdinand, from Milan, Jan. 27, 1604, in Gaye, Carteggio, iii. p. 531). There is every probability in favour of the belief that the portraits of Francesco Sforza and Cristine were taken to Madrid. They were copied there by Rubens, and doubtless perished in the fire of the Palace of Pardo (see Sainsbury, *u. s.*, p. 238).

the names of his friends in letters or introduces them into the scenes of plays. In his earliest comedy, written in 1530, he has a good word for patrons and friends of every rank; and the pedant who tries to persuade Marescalco that he ought to marry, wishes him a son "beautiful as Davalos, and eloquent as the Duke of Urbino," not failing on the same occasion to praise "Titian, the only rival of nature; Sansovino, the half of a new Michaelangelo, and Sebastian, more than divine." *

Titian's duty to Gritti was of a more earnest and solid kind. On the 6th of October, 1531, Sanuto registers a visit to the public palace where he saw Titian's picture just exhibited representing St. Mark with the kneeling Doge before the Virgin and a suite of saints. It was a subject of comment, says Sanuto, that a quarrel had broken out amongst the saints as to who contributed most to the election of "Serenissimus." St. Bernardino claimed that the Doge had been chosen on the day of his festival; St. Marina, that he owed his elevation to the recovery of Padua on the day of her canonization; St. Louis, that his was the name of Alvise Pisani the procurator of St. Mark who was most instrumental in raising the Doge to power. St. Mark had heard of the quarrel, and brought the saints and the Doge together to submit their differences to the Virgin. The unanimous ver-

* The "Marescalco" was written in 1530 (see Aretino to Vasone, Sept. 17 of that year, in Lettere di M. P. Aretino, and compare Act V. Sc. 3, of the Marescalco in Quattro Commedie, del Div. P. Aretino, 8vo, Venice, 1588, p. 40).

dict of all Venetian annalists was, that this was one of Titian's most successful pictures. It perished unhappily in the fire of 1577.*

During the winter of 1531-32 Titian probably paid his annual visit to Cadore. In the following summer we find him either at Ferrara or busy with odd commissions for the Gonzagas, painting amongst other things a picture of a gazelle imported from Egypt by way of Alexandria. On the eve of the Emperor's visit to Mantua, he engaged the services of a scene-painter whose quaint designation of "Il piacevole pittore" excites our curiosity.†

* See the extract from Sanuto, in Appendix.

† See as to this, letters of June, October, and November, in Appendix.

CHAPTER X.

Charles V. revisits Italy.—Titian is asked to meet him at Mantua.—He joins the Court at Bologna.—Conferences with Secretary Covos.—Titian chooses the pictures which Alfonso d' Este gives to the Emperor.—Charles sits to Titian.—Sketch portrait and other likenesses of the Emperor.—Titian returns to Venice and receives a knighthood.—Davolos and portrait allegories.—Ippolito de' Medici sits twice to Titian.—St. John the Almsgiver.—Titian's social position and state of parties at Venice.—Portraits of Francis the First.—Titian and the Rovere.—Venus at Florence.—"Bella di Titiano."

After Charles the Fifth's coronation at Bologna, the whole of Italy lay at his feet. The Pope was his ally, Mantua was subservient, and Genoa occupied; Venice remained at peace, Milan subject, Ferrara cowed, and Savoy doubtful. Florence alone, hoping against hope, but doomed to perish, defied the imperial arms. Within the Peninsula little remained for Charles to compass, except the reduction of Tuscany or the settlement of the contested claims to Modena and Reggio. But beyond the Alps the pacification of 1530 increased rather than diminished the complications to which the empire was subjected. The Pope's alliance widened the breach between Charles and the Reformers; and French enmity still urged the Turks to the conquest of Austria. By strenuous exertions an army was brought together to repel the invasion of the Moslems. The ferment in

the Church required fresh recourse to negotiation, and Charles found it necessary to revisit Italy and persuade the Pope to call a General Council.

After the retreat of the Turks from Hungary in 1532, Charles crossed the Alps into Friuli and wrote to his brother Ferdinand in October, that he had resolved to meet Clement the Seventh at Bologna.* On the 3rd of November he rode to Conegliano, where he was met by the Dukes of Ferrara and Mantua. Near Vicenza, on the following day, Francesco Maria, Duke of Urbino, greeted him in the name of the Venetian Republic. At Mantua, which he entered on the 6th, Francesco Sforza waited to receive him.† It was no longer a question whether the imperial alliance should be preferred to the friendship of France. The influence of Charles was paramount, and all the princes who flocked to the presence of the Emperor bowed humbly before the potentate at whose bidding states and principalities were distributed. The number of councillors who followed the Emperor was not so large as that which accompanied him in 1530; but he was amply provided with generals, and his favourite secretary Covos, Commander of Castile, was charged with the department of Italian affairs. No sooner had the Emperor set foot in Italy, than he became a popular idol, and his secretaries were worshipped with considerable unanimity. Covos, who was fond of pictures, was smothered with kindness, and tempted with appropriate bribes, and private instructions were

* Lanz., *u. s.*, ii. 18

† Ibid. ii. 22.

given to envoys and agents to gain his favour on any conditions. Ferrante Gonzaga, brother of the Duke of Mantua, tried to ingratiate himself by promising a picture by Sebastian del Piombo.* Alfonso of Ferrara gave his envoys clear instructions to win him at any price, and Titian was set to work to attain this end.† The Marquess of Mantua, on his part, overwhelmed the Emperor and his followers with appropriate civilities, flattering their fondness for art, though he had nothing to expect or to desire for himself, since Charles had already done more for him than for any Italian prince except the Sforza, and very properly taking care that no mistake of his should mar the prospects of other members of his family.

The court of the Emperor was described by contemporaries as forming a marked contrast to that of Francis the First; and it was noticed at Parma in 1529 that the Kaiser and his suite were by no means such splendid cavaliers as the French, even under a subordinate agent like Chabot.‡ But Charles was an accomplished patron of painting, which he first learnt to appreciate in Flanders, and he was a collector of such inveterate habits that he carried his treasures with him to the solitary convent in Estremadura, in which he elected to end his worn and troubled existence. At Bologna, in 1530, he indulged his favourite taste in visits to churches and monasteries

* See the life of that painter.

† Campori, Tiziano e gli Estensi, *u. s.*, p. 22.

‡ Niccolo da Ponte's Relazione in Alberi, *u. s.*, 2nd Series, iii. 157.

where pictorial and other treasures were accumulated. His interview with Damiano the friar, who made wonderful figures out of inlaid wood, is celebrated; his attention to Parmegianino and other painters is known. At Mantua he was not an hour in the palace before he proceeded to investigate its contents. The Duke of Mantua showed him the newly decorated rooms of his palace, and particularly the Camera dell' Arma, where his best pictures were exhibited. On one wall—we saw—was Del Sarto's copy of Raphael's "Leo," on another wall a "St. Jerom" by a Fleming; a third contained Raphael's likeness of him as a boy, and Titian's portrait of him as a man.* The panoplies in the armoury were next visited. They were very remarkable as comprising the armour of every Marquess of the Gonzaga family since its foundation. Then the helmets of the Duke of Urbino, which were celebrated amongst connoisseurs, were discussed, and the Emperor proudly showed some of his own cuirasses, which were acknowledged as marvels of German workmanship.† Of all these masterpieces none struck the Emperor so much as Federico's likeness by Titian;‡ and Charles expressed so strong a wish to obtain a portrait of himself from the same hand, that the Duke of Mantua, on the following day, sat down at his desk and penned the following letters:—

* See Ippolito Calandra to Federico Gonzaga, from Mantua, Oct. 28, 1531, in Pungileoni's Raphael, p. 182; and Aretino to the Empress in Lettere di M. P. Aretino, i. 257.

† Darco, Delle Arti, ii. 118–119.

‡ Aretino to the Empress, Lettere di M. P. Aret. i. 257.

FEDERICO GONZAGA TO TITIAN AT VENICE.

"MESSER TIZIANO,

"I should be very glad to have you near me, and beg as hard as I can that you come hither as quickly as you are able, which will do me a singular pleasure."

"From MANTUA, *November* 7, 1532." *

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

"MASTER TITIAN,

"Be content when you come hither—and I hope you will come for my sake—to have some fish (pesce suola) brought with you; and as I expect you shortly, I say no more than that I am yours,

"THE DUKE OF MANTUA."†

"From MANTUA, *Nov.* 7, 1532."

In the evening Charles and the Duke were present at a play in the Castle theatre, the scenes being painted for the occasion by pupils of Giulio Romano.

Titian had been staying at Ferrara in July, when no doubt he sketched the profile of Ariosto for the "Orlando Furioso." ‡ He was in Venice when Federico Gonzaga wrote; but he could not or would not accept the Duke's invitation, preferring to follow the court to Bologna, where Alfonso of Este had sent two of his most trusted agents.

Since 1530 the cities of Modena and Reggio had

* See the original in Appendix.

† Gaye, Carteggio, ii. 249.

‡ Campori (Tiziano e gli Estensi p. 21) proves that Titian was at Ferrara on the 24th and 25th of July, 1532.

been occupied by Imperial garrisons pending the award of Charles, who was to decide whether they should be restored to the Pope or Ferrara. It was of the utmost importance to Alfonso to secure, not only the favour of the Emperor, but that of the omnipotent secretary Covos, in whose desk the papers of the negotiation lay. The Emperor, on the other hand, and Covos himself, were not unwilling to make the award as to Modena and Reggio dependent upon the generosity of Alfonso. Much had been said—probably at Mantua, certainly at Bologna—of the splendid works of art which Alfonso had accumulated at Ferrara. There was a portrait of the Emperor by some good painter, a likeness of Alfonso, and other pictures by Titian, worth their weight in gold. Not only did the Emperor in person communicate with Titian as to this, but Titian was often closeted with Covos, who wrote out lists of what he should like to get from the treasures of Ferrara, and prepared to ask for them of the agents of the Duke.* In order to keep Titian in good humour, Covos employed him to paint the Emperor's portrait. He then matured a plan for acquiring the Ferrarese pictures, which he carried out in the following fashion:—The agents of the Estes at Bologna were Jacopo Alvarotti and Matteo Casella, both of whom were instructed by the Duke to gain the favour of Covos. On the 9th of January, 1533, Casella called on the Castilian secretary to request a reply to one

* For this and the negotiations between Covos and the Ferrarese agents, consult Campori's Tiziano e gli Estensi.

of the Duke's memorials. He had hardly begun upon matters of general import when Covos stopped him to speak of the pictures in the possession of the Duke of Ferrara, alluding especially to a portrait of the Emperor and one of the Duke himself, of which Titian had often spoken. Having thus started this agreeable theme he went straight to the point, and expressed his desire to receive as a present the two portraits and a likeness of Ercole, hereditary prince of Ferrara. The envoys in reply told Covos that he could choose out of the pictorial treasures at Ferrara whatever he liked to take, and Titian himself was suggested as the person best fitted to direct his choice. Covos said he would consult the painter, but declared, meanwhile, that whatever Titian might think, it should be a condition *sine quâ non* that the portrait of Alfonso would be given up to him. Three days later Casella and Alvarotti were admitted to an interview, and told that Titian had advised Covos to take the portrait of Alfonso, a Judith, a St. Michael, and a Madonna. It was vain for Casella to repeat that the likeness of Alfonso was an old one which was no longer like, or to suggest that a new one might be taken together with that of the Prince. Covos remained firm, saying the envoys might do as they pleased, but he insisted on the original portrait because Titian had told the Emperor that it was a very fine one. The latter, he added, should be sent to the Emperor at Bologna—the former to the Emperor's agent at Genoa. Covos was so impatient to obtain the booty, that, finding it had not been despatched within the week, he made

repeated inquiry respecting it of the ducal agents. On the 23rd of January Alvarotti and Casella delivered the portrait into the secretary's hands, accompanied by a letter from Alfonso announcing the despatch of the pictures to Genoa, and offering to do anything more that Covos might think fit to require. With ill-concealed exultation Covos took the likeness, which, he said, would be dear to him as recalling the features of the Prince, and added, with brutal indiscretion, that he would not have hesitated to ask for more favours of the Duke had he known that his Excellency possessed anything that would please him. Whilst the envoys were waiting for their interview Titian came into the room, and, as Casella informed his master, received for the second time injunctions to attend to the recommendations of the Duke. His answer was that he would do all he could to serve his Grace, though he was overwhelmed with business and hardly able to snatch his meals. A few days later Covos met Casella and told him that Alfonso's portrait was hanging in the Emperor's room. The Pope, he thought, would be surprised to hear it. Casella retorted: "The Pope might rather complain that the features of the Duke should have been engraved on the Emperor's heart." * Whether Covos obtained the portrait of the heir-apparent of the Estes, whether the "Judith," the "St. Michael," or the "Madonna" were pictures by Titian; whether Titian made a copy of the likeness of Alfonso or not, are questions upon which the secret papers of Ferrara cast no light. A

* Campori, Tiziano e gli Estensi, pp. 21—24.

replica of Alfonso's first portrait was certainly made in the master's workshop. It passed a few years since out of the Kaunitz collection into the hands of M. Artaria at Vienna.* The recommendations of the Duke, alluded to by Casella, may have had reference to this replica, or to the second likeness of Alfonso, which Titian finished and delivered to Ercole the Second in 1537. It may have had reference to an allegory of "Minerva and Neptune" which Vasari saw unfinished in Titian's house at Venice.† Neither of these pieces was long preserved.‡

When it was arranged that the Emperor should sit, Lombardi, the sculptor, asked Titian to give him a chance of seeing his Majesty, and Titian allowed him to carry his paintbox. As soon as the sitting began, Lombardi drew a tablet of wax from his pocket and made a relief portrait of the Emperor, which he slipped into his sleeve. The Emperor was too sharp-sighted not to observe what Lombardi had done. He asked for the tablet, praised it, and inquired of the artist whether he was man enough to carve it in marble. Lombardi replied that he was, and begged to be told where he should send the relief when it was finished. The Emperor said it should be brought to

* This portrait, on canvas, is an exact copy of that numbered 452 in the museum at Madrid. It is also signed in the same way, but it is by a later painter than Titian.

† Vas. xiii. p. 44.

‡ A portrait in the Pitti gallery, No. 311, represents Alfonso with his hand on a piece of cannon. It answers the description given by Vasari of one of Titian's works. But this is not an original piece, being by Dossi Dossi; and we can only conclude that the original has been lost, and the copy preserved (compare Vasari, xiii. 25).

him at Genoa; and this alone must convince us that Titian and Lombardi had their sittings of Charles in 1532-3, and not in 1530; for in 1530 the Emperor visited Bologna on his way from Genoa to the Alps, and in 1533 he was coming from Germany to embark at Genoa for Spain.*

Titian's first sketch was preserved at Bologna till the middle of the present century, when it was sold to an English collector by the owner of the Zambeccari Gallery. It was a spirited and rapidly executed bust of Charles in armour, bare-headed and seen to the shoulders—the original, doubtless, of the larger and more finished full length, which perished, after decorating the royal palaces of Brussels and Madrid.†

Monarchs have seldom leisure to sit long to a single painter. Their hours are counted and measured by equerries in waiting. If Charles sat more than once to Titian, he scarcely sat more than an hour at a time; and we can fancy the master rapidly laying in the bust and face of his illustrious sitter, and retiring to execute the full portrait from the sketch. The Emperor's wardrobe would naturally be at the master's

* Compare Vasari, ix. 14.

† As the Emperor and his sister Eleanor left the Netherlands with Mary of Hungary in Sept., 1556, they took away amongst other pictures "el retrato del Emperador Carlos V. nuestro señor en lienzo, armado, con un baston; hecho por Titiano." See the register in Revue Universelle des Arts, 8vo, Paris, 1856, iii. 140. The same picture is in the inventory of August 18, 1556, published in Gachard's Retraite et mort de Charles V., 8vo, Brux. 1855, vol. ii. pp. 90—93. If the author's memory be not treacherous, the Zambeccari sketch, which is ill engraved in the "Cronaca" of Gaetano Giordani (8vo, Bologna, 1842), was an original. It was sold in 1856 to Signor M. A. Gualandi, who parted with it to an Englishman, whose name was not publicly divulged.

service; and if royal portraits were made then as they are now, Titian must have had more than one suit of Charles' clothes in the presses of his workshop.* This is the more likely to have occurred, because Titian was not content to paint the Emperor in armour. He also executed at the same period the portrait of Charles in gala, which still remains in the Museum of Madrid.

Charles the Fifth was not handsome. Even when drawn by the elder Holbein as a boy out hawking, his nose is turned up to a point, and his lower lip protrudes like that of all the princes of his house.† But contemporary observers affirmed in 1530 that nothing disfigured the Emperor's face so much as a long chin, whilst the frame was seen to be manly, regular, and strong.‡ Of himself Charles was wont to say that he was by nature ugly, but that being frequently painted uglier, he favourably disappointed those who expected to see an ill-favoured individual.§ In Titian's gala portrait the dress is gorgeous, but no art could give beauty to the features, though Aretino said of them that the eye divulged clemency and justice, and the brow commingled "virtue, fortune, wisdom, majesty, and grace."‖ A pale skin, blue

* To illustrate this we may quote a letter from G. F. Grossi to the Marquess of Mantua, dated Feb. 15, 1513, in which he says: "M. Rafaello da Urbino mi ha restituito il Saion e altre robe del Sr. Federico per ritrarlo c'havea," Campori, Notizie, Mod. 1870, p. 7.

† Hans Holbein the Elder's drawings are in the Berlin Museum.

‡ Gasparo Contarini's Relazione in Alberi, vii. p. 269.

§ Lettere a M. P. Aretino, iii. p. 37.

‖ See the sonnet in Ridolfi, i. p. 225.

eyes, hair of a golden auburn, a red moustache and beard are the chief characteristics of a face seen at three-quarters to the left against the deep rich green of a fall of tapestry. A black cap with a white feather covers the head; a silken dress of various textures encases the frame, the white mantle of stiff brocade trimmed with a broad collar and facing of dark fur, the sleeves of striped stuff, puffed at the shoulder, brailed on the arms, the shoes and stockings plain, the hose slashed and striped, the whole embroidered with patterns. The right hand on the haunch plays with a dagger hanging with a pouch to the girdle. The thumb of the left hand is in the collar of a large fawn-coloured Spanish hound, the race of which was not extinct when Velasquez composed his grand picture of "The Hunt." Pity that much of the canvas—and particularly the mouth and lower part of the face—was repainted to cover old and probably irreparable injuries. "Death," says Aretino, "should hate the man who secures immortality to those he would kill." * In this sense Charles was more than once immortalized, but never, as he then thought, in a more skilful manner." † We shall presently see how he showed his gratitude. After his departure for

* Aretino to Veronica Gambara, in Lettere di M. P. A. i. p. 179.

† The full length of Charles with the dog is No. 453 in the Museum of Madrid; on canvas, m. 1.92 h. by 1.11. There are references to its existence in the royal palaces at Madrid in the reigns of Philip the Second, Charles the Second and Third [Madrazo (Pedro de) Catalogo, 8vo, 1872, p. 245]. The face is of the same age here as in the Zambeccari bust sketch. The colours, where there are no repaints, have lost their freshness, and look clouded, as they would be if covered with bad varnish.

Genoa, Titian carried the portrait to Venice to copy it for the Duke of Mantua, and he signified his intention to do so in the following letter:—

"TITIAN TO THE DUKE OF MANTUA.

"ILLUSTRIOUS LORD,

"Hearing that your Excellency has gone to the court of his Imperial Majesty, I abstain from coming to Mantua, sighing at my bad fortune in not having left Bologna soon enough to meet your Grace. At Venice I shall prepare the copy of the portrait of his Majesty, which I take home with me at your Excellency's bidding.*

"From BOLOGNA, *March* 10, 1533."

The portrait which Titian took home and repeated he doubtless sent to Charles. The replica was not sent to Mantua till after 1536, but there it appears to to have remained.† Another example besides that of the Madrid Museum came into the hands of Charles the First of England. It was described in the Whitehall inventory as "the Emperor Charles the Fifth, brought by the King from Spain, being done at length, with a big white Irish dog." ‡

It was said of Charles the Fifth, that from the day

* The original in Appendix.

† See Federico Gonzaga to Titian from Mantua, April 27, in Gaye Carteggio, ii. 262.

‡ Ashmolean MS. in Bathoe's Catalogue, No. 12. The picture was 6 ft. 2 h. by 4 ft. It was sold, according to the "certificates of the contractors for the sale of the goods of the late King Charles" (Academy, March 7, 1874, p. 268), on the 21st of June, 1650, to Sir Balthasar Gerbier for £150. But compare also Sainsbury's Papers, *u. s.* p. 355.

on which he first saw Titian he never condescended to sit to any other master.* The statement is based on the wording of a patent which the Emperor issued to the master on his arrival at Barcelona in 1533. Titian is described in this document, which bears the date of May 10, as a man so exquisitely gifted, that he deserves the name of the Apelles of his time. The Emperor declares that he only follows the example of his predecessors, Alexander the Great and Octavian, in selecting him to be his painter; Alexander having sat to none but Apelles, and Octavian having employed the best of all draughtsmen, lest his glory should be tarnished by the monstrous failures of inexperienced designers: Titian's felicity in art, and the skill he displayed, warrant a grant of Imperial honours. He is therefore created a Count of the Lateran Palace, of the Aulic Council, and of the Consistory, with the title of Count Palatine, and all the advantages attached to those dignities. He acquires the faculty of appointing notaries and ordinary judges, and the power to legitimize the illegitimate offspring of persons beneath the station of Prince, Count, or Baron. His children are raised to the rank of Nobles of the Empire, with all the honours appertaining to families with four generations of ancestors. Titian himself is made a Knight of the Golden Spur with all the privileges of knighthood, to wit: the sword, the chain, and the golden spur; and with this right the entrance to Court is conceded,—a privilege which we shall find Titian frequently exercised.† "Every time," says

* Vasari, xiii. p. 37.

† The diploma, which belonged

Vasari, "that Titian painted the Emperor, he received a thousand *scudi* in gold." We shall find Titian, on his return from Bologna to Venice, investing these savings in lands near Treviso. There were no laws of mortmain in these days, and fields and farms were more frequently in possession of monastic communities than in the hands of laymen. But Titian interested Federico Gonzaga in his purchases, and a good word from the Duke to the chapter of San Benedetto in Polirone, facilitated the transfer which he so much desired.* But whilst Titian was serving the Emperor he was also doing duty with the nobles at the Kaiser's court; amongst whom Davalos Marquess of Vasto played a conspicuous part. Davalos was a soldier of established repute, whose star at this time was quite in the ascendant. At the battle of Pavia in 1525, he had seen Francis the First led into captivity. His division had shared the perils of the Neapolitan campaign in 1529. He was Commander-in-Chief in Lombardy, when called by his sovereign to Vienna in the autumn of 1532, to serve under the orders of Croy against the Turks. The Turks at

to Dr. Taddeo Jacobi of Cadore, was printed by Cadorin in 1850. It will be found in full in Beltrame's Tiziano Vecellio, fol. Milan, 1855. An extract appeared early in Ridolfi, who (Marav. i. 234) erroneously dated the diploma 1553.

* See two letters of Federico to Titian, one of them dated June 5, 1523 (should be 1533) in Pungileoni's contributions to the Giornale Arcadico for 1831, *u. s.*, and Federico to Titian from Mantua, May 9, 1533, in Gaye Carteggio, ii. p. 249. Cadioli (in Darco Arti di Mantova, ii. 123) states that the canons of San Benedetto, in Polirone, were possessors of a "Christ by Titian;" and it is not improbable that Titian gave them such a picture as part of the purchase-money of an estate.

this period were equally noted for bravery and merciless cruelty.

In a recent invasion, as the generals of Charles were well aware, no less than 80,000 Christians had been led by the Moslems into slavery; and every soldier in the Emperor's camp knew that the Turks seldom exchanged a prisoner except for cartloads of children or adult women, whilst the aged or enfeebled captives were invariably massacred. No wonder that Mary of Arragon, the young and lovely wife of Davalos, should have sighed when her husband left her for an encounter with this bloodthirsty people. As Davalos returned, he thought it a good subject to suggest to Titian. The warrior should be represented parting from his wife, but consoled by Victory, Love, and Hymen; and we still admire at the Louvre the beautiful picture into which Titian introduced this allegory.* Mary of Arragon, lovely as her sister whose portrait was drawn by Giulio Romano and painted by Raphael, sits brooding in silent thought over possible disasters. Her bosom is imperfectly covered by snowy folds of muslin; a yellow veil falls over her shoulder, and a green mantle is carelessly thrown over the gorgeous red of her skirt. Her arms are bare, and she holds in her hand a crystal orb, symbol of perishable humanity. Behind her, solemn but erect, and looking steadily into space, Davalos stands in armour and ready to depart; but his hand is on her breast; the boy Cupid brings his bunch of arrows,

* Felibien Entretiens edition of 1705, Tome iii. p. 50, states unconditionally that this picture represents the Marquess of Vasto.

Victory bends in homage, and Hymen, in the background, holds aloft his offering of fruit and flowers. There are certain actions in the pictures of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries which, to the observer of the nineteenth, appear indelicate. That which has been just described may be one of these, yet in the sacred pictures of an earlier generation, and particularly in those which represent the Salutation, the action is still more simple and naïve: and we have to remember that Titian, in the language of his art, is not more outspoken than Shakspeare in his. Nor should we forget to note that the age of Titian is that in which the melody and measure of Ariosto's strophe was clothed in language that now makes readers blush; whilst the loose novels of Bandello surpass in indecency anything that was ever penned by Boccaccio. As an allegorical creation and as a work of a potent master of colour, Titian's canvas is one of the most entrancing that was ever created. There is such perfect sweetness of tone, such a rich strain of harmony in tints, such a solemn technical mastery—that we can do no more than look on and wonder. Such flesh, such complexions, such devout reverence shown in movements or in glance, such resignation in attitude, such depth in expression, it is hard again to find. It may be that we have portraits before us; we may believe indeed that it is so, but who thinks of them, or who thinks that nature here is studied to remind us of individuals? Titian, perhaps, had the general aspect of his sitters, Davalos or Mary of Arragon, in his mind, but he transfigured them with a grand con-

ventionalism of which he alone had the secret, and we gaze on the lovely faces, the slender and elegant hands, the ductile and pulsant flesh,—the eye wanders past the brighter forms into the tender gloom of the background and finds something new to admire at every glance. That this should be the portrait of Davalos which Vasari describes there is every reason to doubt; yet where that portrait is no one as yet can guess.* It is curious indeed that whilst canvases exist in which the figure of del Vasto forms part of a subject—we acknowledge as such the "Allocution" at Madrid—no likeness of him alone is exhibited, except a full length in the gallery of Cassel, which shows Titian's style in its later development, and displays the features of a man much younger than Davalos at that time could have been. Titian's admirers, and particularly those amongst them who had wives and mistresses whose forms they wished to immortalize, asked him to repeat the allegory of Davalos, with such varieties as were necessary to suit their own situation. But these replicas are not handled with the delicacy and success of the original; and two examples at Vienna, though still clearly by Titian, are evidence of his tendency to paint carefully for those he liked, and carelessly or those of whom he expected no favours. We shall presently see that at this very period the Duke of Mantua knew how to distinguish the creations of

* This canvas, engraved by Natalis, and in Filhol, was handsomely photographed by the photographic company. It is numbered 470 at the Louvre, measures m. 1.21 h. by 1.07. The figures are half-lengths. In Felibien's time, the picture was in the cabinet of Louis the Fourteenth. Davalos and his wife sit and stand

Titian which he called "excellent," from others that he thought "less fine and less good."*

Like Davalos, Ippolito de' Medici held high state at the Emperor's court. At the first coming of Charles the Fifth from Spain, he had been sent with his relative and rival Alessandro de' Medici to meet the monarch. At Bologna he took part in the coronation as a cardinal deacon. When Charles assembled an army in 1532, to make head against the Turks under Sultan Solyman, Clement appointed Ippolito his legate, gave him the command of three hundred musketeers, and sent him to Vienna. Here the youthful

in front of a dark-brown wall, to the right of which the sky is seen decked with clouds. The head of the figure in the background to the right is sharply fore-shortened. It holds up with both hands a basket of fruit and flowers. The technical execution of the work is akin to that in a likeness of Ippolito de' Medici, of which we shall presently speak, and both pieces were clearly done at one time. Compare Vasari, xiii. p. 30, and Mündler's Analyse, p. 211.

* Federico Gonzaga to Titian, Mantua, Aug. 3, 1536, in Gaye, ii. 263. The allegories in the gallery of Vienna are these: No. 6, Room 1, Italian Schools, 1st Floor. A lady seated to the left takes the bow and arrows of Amor, whilst a man behind her holds a mirror in which she is gazing. A girl to the right plays a mandoline—half lengths on canvas, 3 ft. by 4, with two pieces sewn on vertically at the sides. Background a dark wall. This, at first sight, looks like a picture by Schiavone; but we may attribute this impression to the repainting which the surface has undergone. There are traces of Titian's hand on the breast of the man, part of the ear and hair of the lady, and fragments of the Amor.

No. 59, Room 2, Italian Schools, 1st Floor. This is more in the spirit of the Louvre canvas, as regards arrangement, than the foregoing. The lady, Cupid, and the female doing homage, are modifications of the same figures in Paris. Instead of a crystal ball, the lady here holds a vase. The man behind is at the extreme left of the picture, holding a glove in his right. He raises a cup in his outstretched hand. The sky, seen to the right, is quite repainted, as indeed are many other parts of the canvas. To this piece the same remarks apply as to its pendant, No. 6. Both are now of the same size.

churchman had leisure to satisfy his martial propensities. He possessed, as Suriano thought, a tincture of letters, and was not to be classed amongst the most illiterate of cardinals, but he disliked being a priest, and roused the anger of Clement in consequence, who was heard to say that he was cracked: "E matto, diavolo, e matto; non vuole esser prete."* Yet when the Turks, surprised by the preparations of the Christian princes, turned back from their advance on Vienna, and Charles withdrew from the army to negotiate in Italy, Ippolito showed more inclination to revisit his native country than to follow the fortunes of the troops sent in pursuit of the Sultan to Hungary. The Italian contingent mutinied, and Ippolito rode at the head of his musketeers through the Austrian provinces conniving, it was said, at their acts of plunder, and rousing the wrath of Charles the Fifth, who arrested and confined him. But Charles was well aware that Ippolito enjoyed the partial favour of the Pope with whom he was going to treat. He liberated the legate, who again appeared in state at the conference of Bologna. The rugged service of a soldier in Hungary was not to Ippolito's taste; but the martial dress of a Hungarian captain caught his fancy. The youthful cardinal sat to Titian at Bologna, in the red cap and variegated plumes of a Magyar. His curved sabre hung from an oriental sash wound round a red-brown coat with golden buttons, and he wielded with his right the mace of command. It appeared as if the burning sun of the Danube valley had bronzed the

* See Suriano's Relazione in Alberi, *u. s.*, vii. 281, and ffg.

features of the chieftain, whose skin seemed to glow with a tropical heat, whilst its surface was smooth and burnished as that of the Bella Gioconda. Nothing shows Titian's versatility and his cleverness in varying technical means with his subject than this likeness at the Pitti. No modulations are to be observed in a face the whole character of which lies in the contrast between polished skin, sharp-cut features, and eyes of portentous cunning. There is something grandly entire in the whole head, to which Titian gives life and elevation by a broad and general rendering of the lineaments, without any research of minutiæ. Smooth rounding and tone were essential to the production of this effect, and these Titian gives with a warmth and softness of fusion truly admirable. Looking closely at the grain of the canvas, one sees the art with which the colour is strained over it, the skill with which uniform gloss is broken with a touch or modified with a glaze. A Giorgionesque and mysterious glow is the result. But it was not enough for Ippolito to be painted as a Hungarian chief; he wished to be represented in the panoply of his time; Titian executed a second portrait of him in armour, and Vasari reports that he saw it in the palace of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, where so many treasures of the master lay hid till the opening of the nineteenth century.*

* Titian's Ippolito in the Pitti Gallery is No. 201, on canvas of life-size. Puccini, who discovered the portraits of the Duke and Duchess of Urbino at the Uffizi, seems not to have found that of Ippolito in armour. See *postea*, and Vasari, xiii. 30. In the Louvre we find a portrait of Ippolito in a red Hungarian dress. It is num-

Though Titian had promised to Ippolito de' Medici that he would visit him in Rome, though he subsequently promised to attend the Court of the Gonzagas at Mantua, he was in no hurry to leave Venice; where, if vanity was his failing, he might daily display the collar, the sword, and the spurs which were the emblems of his new rank.* Once in the sunny workshop at Biri Grande, to which he had moved from his old house on the Grand Canal, Titian had scarcely heart, it seemed, to move, except to enjoy the bracing landscapes of his native Cadore. But duty before all else kept him at Venice, where he was not only under orders to finish the Emperor's portrait for the Duke of Mantua, but under contract to complete an altar-piece for San Giovanni Elemosinario. The church of that name had been burnt down in 1513, and rebuilt by order of Andrea Gritti. It was one of those foundations peculiar to Venice, in which the patronage and the right to appoint curates were vested exclusively in the Doge. It was natural that the high altar should be decorated by a painter who was Gritti's favourite, equally so that it should be decorated at this time, since the altar was finished

bered 478, and painted on a panel, m. 0.64 h. by 0.55. Though catalogued at one time as an original Titian, it is now registered as a copy. It may be the handiwork of Battista Franco (compare Vasari, xi. 320); but we remember also Titian's Ippolito was copied by Rubens (see Sainsbury's Papers, *u. s.*, p. 237).

* Agnello to Jacomo Calandra, from Venice, July 12, 1533; see the original in Appendix. Titian to Vendramo, chamberlain of Cardinal Ippolito de' Medici, dated Venice, Dec. 10, 1534, published from a codex of Apostolo Zeno in the library of the Dominicans at Venice, 8vo, Venice, 1809, for the Nozze Lavagnole-Mila. The reprint of Ticozzi (Vecelli, p. 308) is incorrect.

on the 2nd of October, 1533.* Titian produced a masterpiece, well described by Zanetti as remarkable for massive definition of parts and brush-strokes "of determined conclusiveness." St. John the alms-giver, bishop and patriarch of Alexandria, is not a saint of note. His type is not one that painters know and respect as traditionally preserved in the annals of the pictorial craft. A bishop giving alms might be the subject of a tame composition. None but a man of genius could give interest and force to such a theme; but Titian was a genius, and it is surprising with what power he conceives and carries out his idea. The bishop is seated on a raised podium, to which access is gained by marble steps. At the foot of these steps to the left, a beggar half kneels, half strides to catch the alms. His scanty rags contrast with the white surplice and the red robes and rochet of St. John. But more startling than the contrast of dress is that of movement and action. The bishop has been sitting at a desk reading the gospels, attended by an angel, who carries the cross. He turns with a sudden effort of volition from the book to the beggar, looks grandly down at the humble being at his feet, and drops a purse into his hand. Everything in this noble picture is calculated. The colours are harmonized to a chord of such purity that we think less of the tints singly than of the total effect

* Sansovino, Ven. desc. 186; Vasari, xiii. 30, and ix. 37. Moschini (Guida di Venezia, 163) is the only writer who noticed the inscription on the side of the high altar: "A di doi Octobrio, MDXXXIII."

† Zanetti, Pitt. Ven. *u. s.*, p. 166.

which they produce. Light and shade are balanced so nicely, yet with such breadth, that a brilliant play of sun and atmosphere is suggested. The forms are natural, but of good scantling, moving boldly, yet appropriately, foreshortened with daring yet without strain, the nude correct, the modelling masterly. Though as yet unacquainted with Rome, Titian here emulates the stern power of Michaelangelo in the figure of St. John, whilst in that of the beggar he recalls the rugged grandeur of Raphael's cartoons. Majestic and forcible in the rendering of the human frame, he depicts nature in a state of grand activity, but without any supernatural developments. His colouring is gorgeous, his command of line surprising, his touch unsurpassable. Before the masterpiece which he thus produces, we should fancy that men like Tintoretto, Schiavone, and Paolo Veronese, would pause in wonder, the first being led to exaggerate its daring, the last to approach or transform its sublime realism. Were the light in San Giovanni less dim and dusty than it is, had "St. John the Alms-Giver" been left as Titian made it, and had it not been changed from an arched to a square canvas, nothing would prevent us from acknowledging it as one of the finest works of the master's middle time.*

Meanwhile Titian's social position at Venice was beginning to change, and he might follow with closer

* This picture is on canvas. The upper part has been cut off, and a piece added at the base. The figures are as large as life. Behind them we see the sky partially concealed by a green curtain. This grand work is said to have been painted in rivalry with Pordenone (Vas. xiii. 30). Photograph by Naya.

interest the curious whirl of events, of which the capital of the lagoons was the theatre. Before his departure for Spain, Charles the Fifth had raised to himself, by his management of Italian affairs, a host of enemies. His influence had produced a league, in which the Pope and all the lesser states of Italy were comprised; but Venice, with a wise reticence, had refused to bind herself, whilst Clement the Seventh had taken instant steps to neutralize his own handiword by pitting one member of his family, who was to wed the Emperor's daughter, against another, who was to marry the Dauphin of France. Venice at the time offered the spectacle of a market-place, where each of the parties displayed his political wares; and here Aretino was in his element, receiving offers from all sides without taking part decidedly for any, and imitating, on a small scale, the policy of Venice itself. "Come," said Alessandro de' Medici, who had possession of Florence, and fetched the daughter of Charles the Fifth from Spain, "come, 'Pietro mio,' and make my house thy home. Thou shalt have for thyself a present of the Strozzi palace."* "Here," wrote Ippolito de' Medici, "are gold chains and money." "King Francis sends thee a golden collar," wrote the Connétable de Montmorency. "The Emperor gives thee a pension and a golden cup," quoth De Leyva. Aretino found time at this juncture to write the play of the "Cortigiana," in which he praised his patrons in every camp, and with impartial effrontery published the favours received from them all. Nor did

* Lettere scritte a P. Aretino, i. 156–7.

he forget to mention his friends, the "glorious Titian," and the "stupendous Michaelangelo," or to tell of Titian's portrait of Alfonso, which Buonarotti had so greatly admired at Ferrara, and the Emperor carried off to adorn his palace.* Living in the midst of these currents, Titian naturally picked up what he could in the eddies. Equally familiar with the statesmen and agents on each side, he accepted without compunction the orders which these agents gave, and fresh from the Court of Bologna and the blandishments of Covos or the Emperor, he set up his easel to paint the likeness of Francis the First. But there was this difference in the performance of Titian's duty, that whereas Charles had sat, Francis the First had not, and just as Aretino admitted that he adored the King, though he had never seen him, so Titian produced his likeness with nothing more than a medal to guide him. Three times, it would seem, the master reproduced the features of the King; once, we may think, for the collection which he kept in his own house; once for Francis the First, and once for the Duke of Urbino. The preservation of two of these likenesses in Padua and Paris allows us to test the skill of the master in representing persons whom, it is more than probable, he never saw.

Here again we have to notice an heirloom in possession of Count Sebastian Giustiniani, in which Francis the First is shown bareheaded in profile. The flesh is painted in liquid but luscious tones; the dress, a slashed satin surcoat of brown tone, faced

* La Cortigiana del divino P. Aretino, Venezia, 1534, Act iii. Sc. 8.

with brown tinted fur; a medal hanging from a golden string, merely indicated. A finished study of head and neck, it is sketchy in the frame, but the whole, evidently done from a medal, has been injured by retouching and mending, though still spirited and clever, and obviously the original from which the more splendid and more finished likeness at the Louvre was taken.* Every one knows the shape of the head of Francis, his long pointed nose, the small dark eye, bolstered on all sides with broad, fleshy brows and cheek, the jaw wide and strong, to suit a bull neck, hair straggling in short, straight spikes about the forehead, the beard black and closely clipped. These characteristic features are admirably preserved in the canvas at the Louvre, where the face looks so fresh as to suggest a study from nature. But here the head is covered with a jewelled toque of black velvet fringed with feather, the red satin of the slashed coat shows its bright reflexes against the white of the whitest under-linen. A snowy frill sits in neat plaits round the neck, and the facings of the coat are of fur. Titian must have been familiar with the air of courts to paint such a picture as this. But he does even more than show us a prince whose bearing is in every inch that of a king. We compare Francis with Charles, as designed by the same hand,

* This portrait was known to Ridolfi (Marav. i. 262). It is now in a bad state of preservation, the brown background being new, the nose and several bits of the dress re-painted. A piece of canvas sewn on all round helps to disfigure the picture. On the lower band of new canvas we read, "FRANCISCVS GALLIÆ REX." The figure is seen to the breast, and is of life size without the hands.

the first picture exhibits a gallant, the last a shy and sombre monarch.*

Almost at the time when these works were produced Titian also copied, from an older likeness, the semblance of Isabella d'Este. There was no reason why the Marchioness should not have sat to the master, who was constantly paying visits to Mantua; but she evidently wished to be seen as a bride and not as an old woman, and she borrowed a portrait executed years before and sent it to Titian to draw from, rather than be shown in weeds or with the wrinkles of a matron. An experienced eye may still discern that the canvas which represents Isabella as a young girl in the Belvedere at Vienna was executed at the period we are now noticing, whilst a letter, written by the Marchioness, explains how Titian came to reproduce the features which were no longer her own.

ISABELLA D'ESTE GONZAGA TO BENEDETTO AGNELLO, AT VENICE.

"The persons who lent the portrait of ourselves which Titian received for the purpose of taking one like it, beg most urgently that it should be returned. We, therefore, desire that you should get it back and

* The portrait now at the Louvre, and numbered 469, is on canvas, m. 1.09 h., by 0.89. The right hand is seen on the hilt of a sword; the king's age is 35 to 40. See the engravings by Gilles-Edme Petit, Massard, and Leroux; and compare Filhol, a fine photograph by Braun of Dornach. A third portrait of Francis, already alluded to in the text, was seen by Vasari in the palace of Urbino (Vas. xiii. p. 32). Curiously enough, Gotti's inventory registers it as Ritratto del Duca Francesco I. (Gotti, Gallerie di Firenze, 8vo, Firenze, 1872, p. 336).

sent by a discreet person, and so packed as to receive no damage.

"From MANTUA, *March 6th*, 1534." *

The freshness and youth in the portrait are undeniable, but the flesh greatly lacks modulation. The dress, of extreme elegance, is treated with extraordinary skill, and we observe that Isabella, following the fashion of her time, bathed her hair to give it an auburn tinge, and covered her head with the jewelled turban, which distinguishes the Lombards from the Venetians of this time. A rich gown, with capricious ornaments of white and black and dark green shoulder puffs, sleeves of a blue transparent web, with edging stripes of alternate white and gold and patterns in the bands, white frills at the wrist, pearls in the ears, grey Astrakan fur across the shoulders, all admirable in texture, contrast with the flat tones of a face, throat and hands, perhaps originally fair, but now injured beyond redemption by abrasion and retouching. That this canvas represents Isabella there is no reason to doubt, since Vorsterman's print, from a copy taken by Rubens at Mantua, was inscribed with her name.† That it was customary to

* See the original letter in Appendix.

† The history of this portrait, which is now in the Gallery of Vienna, is this. It was bought by the Archduke Leopold Wilhelm for his gallery at Brussels, and so passed into the Imperial Austrian collection. It has been stated (Historisch-Kritischer Catalog der Gall. von Belved. zu Wien, von A. Krafft, 8vo, Wien, 1854, p. 60) that the portrait is that which passed into the collection of Charles I., but this is a mistake; firstly because the canvas in that collection measured 2 feet high by 2 feet 5 in., whilst that of Vienna

represent her as a bride or a young mother, is clear from numerous likenesses of similar type in public and private galleries, which only differ slightly from each other in respect of age, features, and dress. But the state to which the best of these likenesses was reduced by time and restoring, makes it hard to recognise the hand of Titian, whilst, in most instances, that of imitators and copyists is apparent. None of the replicas have more claim to originality than that of the Hermitage at St. Petersburg, where Isabella is represented, in company of a boy. The touch in some parts of this canvas is of that strength and breadth which we acknowledge as peculiar to Titian; but the background and other parts are repainted so as to recal Paris Bordone, to whom indeed the work has of late been assigned.*

measures 3 feet 2 in. high, by 2 feet; and secondly, because Charles I.'s copy was dressed in red (See Bathoe's Catalogue). But the Vienna example is no doubt that which Rubens copied (see the inventory in Sainsbury's Rubens, *u. s.*, 237), as it tallies with Vorsterman's print inscribed "Isabella Estensis Francisci Gonzagæ March. Mantovæ, uxor. E. Titiani prototypo. P. P. Rubens, exc." The background of the picture at Vienna is a green hanging on a dark wall. Let us note the large abrasion on the forehead and right eye, and the hands reduced to formless logs. The whole picture is injured by abrasions and re-painting. The princess is slightly turned to the left, and sits with her left hand on the arm of a chair, her right clutches the edge of her dress. There are prints by Van der Steen, I. Krepp, and others, a photograph by Miethke. A copy is No. 495 in the Madrid Museum.

* An original portrait of Isabella "in black clothes," by Titian, must have existed at Mantua, where Rubens copied it (see Sainsbury, *u. s.*, 237). The portrait, No. 111 at the Hermitage, is on canvas, 3 ft. 2½ high, by 2 ft. 6, and was catalogued under Bordone's name according to the opinion of Dr. Waagen (see Die Gemäldesammlung in der Eremitage, &c., 8vo, München, 1864, p. 65). Isabella wears a low dress of green, or blue and yellow

Of this portrait there are so many repetitions and adaptations that they must all have had a common original. But whether that original is the canvas at St. Petersburg it is hard to say. It is only necessary to note the copies or adaptations at Strahow, near Prague, in the Belvedere dépôt at Vienna, in the museum of Vicenza, in the collections of Montanari at Verona, and Maldura at Padua.*

Of one great chieftain, whose influence at this time was paramount at Venice, history says nothing to warrant us in thinking that he patronized Titian. Yet it is more than probable that Titian, at this period, was acquainted with Francesco Maria della Rovere. We saw that he had painted for this prince a "Magdalen" and the likeness of Francis the First. Other pictures, possibly of an earlier date, found their

figured brocade, white puff sleeves, with blue bracings, and a turban, as at Vienna. Round her neck is a collar of pearls. She holds the arm of her boy, who is seen to the shoulders, dressed in a figured jacket with lake sleeves. Except the forehead and right eye, and part of the throat and left hand, there is little left that recalls Titian, the surfaces being extensively re-painted. The background is renewed after Paris Bordone, but the picture, as a whole, is very like an injured Titian.

* The copy at Strahow is numbered 1026. That in the Depository at the Belvedere of Vienna belonged to Archduke Leopold Wilhelm, and is engraved by Prenner as Palma Vecchio; that of Vicenza is numbered 53, and catalogued as of Palma's school. The copy belonging to the late Conte Montanari at Verona, was classed in the "School of Giorgione." It was quite disfigured by re-painting. There is nothing to be said of the Maldura copy.

A copy of a portrait of a lady in a jewelled turban and red velvet dress, preserved in the deposits of the Belvedere Museum, seems to represent Isabella in her old age. One might ask whether it might not have been copied by a Fleming from an original by Titian, perhaps from the missing original of Charles I.'s collection.

way to Urbino, and conspicuous amongst these is the celebrated "Venus" in the *tribuna* of the Uffizi. Francesco Maria della Rovere was connected by marriage with the Gonzagas. He was a frequent guest at Mantua. But in 1532 he was general-in-chief of the Venetian forces and a resident at Venice, and thus had every opportunity of patronizing the greatest of North Italian masters. The "Venus" which Vasari was fortunate enough to see at Urbino, passed as an heirloom, in the seventeenth century, to the gallery of Florence, and this is all that history records of it.* But the style points to a date not very remote from that of the portraits of Francesco Maria and his Duchess in the Uffizi, and these, we are assured, were finished in 1537. Compared with the "Venus" of Darmstadt, that of Florence is more fully developed, less of a girl, more of a woman, yet still lithe and slender. Lying as nature shaped her, with her legs entwined, at the foot of a deep green hanging, on a muslin sheet, that covers a ruby tinged damask couch, her left arm reposes on her frame, her right supporting her on cushions, whilst the hand is playing with a chaplet of flowers. We may fancy her to have bathed and to be waiting for the handmaids, who are busy in the room, one of them having raised the lid of a chest and taken a dress out, whilst a second stoops to select another. Meanwhile a little dog lies curled up on the couch. In forming this "Venus,"

* Vasari, xiii. p. 32, to which compare Director Aurelio Gotti's Le Gallerie di Firenze, *u. s.*, p. 103; and Ridolfi's Marav. i. 225.

if Venus be an appropriate name, Titian seems to have had in his mind the gorgeous word-painting of Ariosto as put into Aretino's mouth by Dolce:—*

> "Spargeasi per la guancia delicata
> Misto color di rose e di ligustri.
> Di terso avorio era la fronte lieta,
> Che lo spazio finia con giusta meta
> Sotto due neri e sottilissimi archi
> Son due neri occhi, anzi due chiari soli,
> Pietosi a riguardar, a mover parchi,
> Intorno a cui par che amor scherze e voli.
>
> Bianca neve e il bel collo, e il petto latte,
> Il collo e tondo, il petto colmo e largo."

Not after the model of a Phryne, nor yet with the thought of realizing anything more sublime than woman in her fairest aspect, did Titian conceive this picture. Nature as he presents it here is young and lovely, not transfigured into ineffable noblesse, but conscious and triumphant without loss of modesty. What the painter achieves, and no other master of the age achieves with equal success, is the representation of a beauteous living being whose fair and polished skin is depicted with enamelled gloss, and yet with every shade of modulation which a delicate flesh comports;—flesh not marbled or cold, but sweetly toned; and mantling with life's blood, flesh that seems to heave and rise and fall with every breath. Perfect distribution of space, a full and ringing harmony of tints, atmosphere both warm and mellow, are all combined in such wise as to bring us in contact with something that is real, and we feel as

* Dialogo, *u. s.*, pp. 31–32.

we look into the canvas that we might walk into that apartment and find room to wander in the grey twilight into which it is thrown by the summer sky that shows through the coupled windows.*

It might occur to many to think that the "Venus" of the Uffizi was a portrait immortalizing the charms of a young and beautiful woman dear in a passing way to the Duke of Urbino. But this need not necessarily be true, if the figure be but an embodiment of a new type which struck Titian's fancy at the time. The figure as a whole, was frequently copied by contemporaries and later artists; and of this we have examples in the replica by a Venetian of Titian's age at the Uffizi, and adaptations such as are seen in the Butler Johnstone and Hampton Court collections.† But the face was also one which reappeared in diverse forms in pictures of varied character, and this we observe in a portrait of a young woman at the Pitti which goes by the name of "La bella di Titiano," and two or three fancy pieces in the galleries of St. Petersburg and Vienna.

"La bella di Titiano" at the Pitti, is one of Titian's likenesses in which every feature tells of

* This picture, now No. 1117 in the Tribuna at the Uffizi, is on canvas; the principal figure being large as life. Some injury has been done to the surface by cleaning, but no important parts are damaged. Photograph by the Photographic Company.

† The replica in the Uffizi is not exhibited.

The "Venus" in the late Munro (now Butler Johnstone) Collection in London, is identical with No. 1117 at the Uffizi, but the background differs. It is a good old Venetian copy on canvas, which Dr. Waagen (Treasures, ii. 133) took for an original.

The "Venus," No. 558 at Hampton Court, is to be placed in the same class.

high lineage and distinction. The pose, the look, the dress are all noble. We may presume that the name was accepted for want of a better. The face was so winning that it lurked in Titian's memory, and passed as a type into numerous canvases in which the painter tried to realize an ideal of loveliness. The head being seen about two-thirds to the left, whilst the eyes are turned to the right, the spectator is fascinated by the glance in whatever direction he looks at the canvas. The eye is grave, serene, and kindly, the nose delicate and beautifully shaped, the mouth divine. Abundant hair of a warm auburn waves along the temples, leaving a stray curl to drop on the forehead. The rest is plaited and twisted into coils round a head of the most symmetrical shape. A gold chain falls over a throat of exquisite model, and the low dress with its braided ornaments and slashed sleeves, alternately tinted in blue and white and white and purple is magnificent. One hand—the left—is at rest; the other holds a tassel hanging from a girdle. Nothing can exceed the delicacy and subtlety with which the flesh and dress are painted; the tones being harmonized and thrown into keeping by a most varied use and application of glazings and scumblings.*

From the palace—for here we are surely in the best and highest of company—we descend the social

* This picture is a half length of life-size on canvas. It measures 1 brac. 14 in height, and 1.6 in breadth, and is numbered 18 in the Pitti collection. Some of the finish has been removed by cleaning, and the abrasion of the finest glazings makes the surface look comparatively cold. This coldness is most apparent about the throat, but may also be seen in the hair, which is partly retouched, and in the warm dark back-ground. Photograph by Alinari of Florence.

scale to the "mistress of Titian" at the Hermitage of Petersburg; a half-length of a slender girl in a red hat prettily decorated with a white feather—a double string of pearls, and a jewelled clasp, earrings of pearls, and necklace of the same, enhance the charms before us. But instead of a dress to match this gala head, we find the form all but unclad, the muslin under-garment hardly showing at the shoulder, the frame but loosely covered with a green pelisse lined with ermine. We might think this is a young lady whose head is dressed for a ball, waiting for her maid to complete the toilet; but the face, which vaguely recalls the Venus of the Uffizi, is too gay, too arch and too provoking, and women who are dressing are not necessarily in this best of tempers.*

More composed but still bright-eyed and smiling, is the girl in a similar undress at Vienna. But here the hair alone is twisted with artful finish and adorned with strings of pearls. The body is plump and loosely decked in a black satin pelisse lined with ermine which hardly covers when drawn together with both hands the rounded shoulders and torso.† It is not too much to say that Titian painted subjects

* This canvas is No. 105 in the Petersburg gallery, and belonged to Crozat's collection in Paris. It measures 3 ft. and ¾ in height, by 2 ft. 5¾. The back-ground of a warm green verges to brown in the darker parts. The flesh is injured by abrasion and modern stippling.

† On the first floor, and second room of the Italian Schools at the Belvedere in Vienna, this picture—on canvas, 3 ft. 2 by 2 ft., is preserved. The back-ground is dark brown, but modern; the flesh injured by abrasion and retouching; one finger of the right hand repainted and lengthened; the left hand altogether spoiled by so-called restoring. Compare Krafft's Historisch-Krit. Catalog. *u. s.*, n. 62.

of this class in considerable numbers. No doubt a canvas of this kind was in his mind when he wrote in 1534 to Ippolito de Medici's chamberlain, saying he had prepared a picture of a woman for the Cardinal which he saved with difficulty from the clutches of the Cardinal of Lorraine, who only let it go on condition of obtaining a similar one.* It was probably from pieces of this sort that Rubens copied four canvases registered in the inventories of his succession as Venetian courtezans, and got the idea for his "Chapeau de Paille."† The picture at Vienna is probably that described in a catalogue of the gallery of Charles the First of England as "a naked woman with both her hands putting on her smock, which the king changed with the Duchess of Buckingham for one of his Majesty's Mantua pieces."‡ The Duchess probably preferred something of Titian that was more holy and less nude.

* Titian to Vendramo, Dec. 20, 1534, *u. s.*

† Sainsbury's Papers, *u. s.*, p. 238.

‡ Bathoe's Catalogue, *u. s.* The picture is described as half length, the figure of life-size, the canvas 3 ft. 2 by 2 ft. 6.

CHAPTER XI.

A summer storm.—Titian in Cadore and his relations with the Cadorines.—Death of Clement VII. and Alfonso d'Este.—Titian and Ferrante Gonzaga.—Portrait of the Cardinal of Lorraine.—Renewed promise to visit Rome.—The triumvirate.—Charles the Fifth offers to take Titian to Spain.—Tunis expedition.—Vermeyen.—Death of Ippolito de' Medici.—Portrait of Charles V.—Titian with the Duke of Mantua at Asti.—His acquaintances at Court.—Portraits of the Sforzas and Estes; of the Duke and Duchess of Urbino; of Bembo.—The twelve Cæsars.—The Annunciation.—Titian's style compared with that of Raphael and Michaelangelo.—Was Titian acquainted with Correggio.—Contemporary painters and disciples of Titian.

CADORE never lost its attractions for Titian. After the death of Gregorio Vecelli, which took place about 1527, Francesco Vecelli retired to the old house at the Pieve, where he practised alternately as a painter and a dealer in corn and timber.* When Titian felt weary of his labours or worn by the heats of the city, he wandered away towards the place of his birth, to visit his cottage in the Trevisan province, or enjoy the mountain air of Cadore. He would pass on his way through Treviso, to Ceneda and Belluno; and in the charming landscapes of these regions, which vary from the richest lowland scenery to the most rugged of Alpine rocks, he gratefully revived his jaded spirits and refreshed his tired eye. From head quarters

* Ticozzi, Vecelli, 259.

near Treviso or Piazza Arsenale he might study at appropriate intervals the varied outlines of Dolomites or rolling plain, and the haze of a summer sky on the corn fields, or the swelling clouds driven by storms from the mountain ranges. That on these journeys he never forgot his sketch-book we may well believe, but he sometimes also carried his easel and paint-box; and on one of the journeys undertaken about this period he doubtless sketched the scenes that were to decorate his "battle of Cadore," and caught, as it passed, the summer squall which he depicted with such admirable skill in a canvas at Buckingham Palace. We may think that Titian was on the border of the true Alpine country when, at the close of August, this squall burst upon his path. The pure sky which shows the deepest blue above the foreground, loses its intensity of tone and grows clearer as it recedes to a distance of Alp; the view of which is closed by a homestead and church tower. A grey storm cloud, with a sullen edge and rolling prominences tipped with light, drifts before the gust sending a deluge as it passes over field and covert. Lights and shadows chase each other across the undulations, giving lurid brightness to the slopes before the village, and darkness to the clump of trees on a less distant rise. Nearer again a strip of land glistens under a fitful gleam of sun; yet nearer, a bed of bushy shrubbery forms a foreground through which two shepherds lead their flocks, and a peasant drives a donkey. On a path near the church two friars return laden from their quest, and a dog runs frightened towards his

kennel. The whole of the right side of the picture is occupied by tall stems of trees which throw their branches across the sky. In some of his finished pieces Titian's foreground is decked with plants of which we can tell the names. Some of his drawings and woodcuts or prints are remarkable for varieties of pine and beech, and curious details of roots and stones. Here his object is to catch an effect of storm and indicate the swiftness or suddenness of its passage. His foliage is conventional in touch but boldly thrown with a liquid pigment on the canvas. But he realizes with force and mastery the fleeting scud of clouds in rapid movement and the changes wrought upon the ground by their shadows; he balances with the true instinct of a finished painter the gloom which cloud-masses produce and the sun which they fail to intercept.*

It may be that Titian took this sketch when travelling early in the autumn of 1534 to show the emblems of his new dignity to his friends at Cadore. Since he had become rich and risen to honours the Cadorines were prouder than ever of their countryman, making much of him at the Pieve and courting his interest at Venice. He lent them money when they wanted it, and helped them willingly when they asked for favours; and they in turn were always ready to help the friends of the Vecelli.

* This canvas, 3 ft. 9½ high, by 3 ft. 1½, was exhibited by command of the Queen at the Academy in 1875. There are some signs of re touching on the edges of the trees.

TITIAN VECELLI AT CADORE TO TITIAN VECELLI THE PAINTER, AT VENICE.

"GOOD SIR COUSIN AND ALL BUT BROTHER,

"On my return from the fair at Bolzano, a few days since, I learnt that you had been here and had paid me a visit. I regret my absence the more because it prevented me from making proper return for all that we owe you in respect of numerous proofs of friendship shown to our community at large and in special to our envoys, for all which you may be assured we have a grateful memory and a true sense of obligation. Ser Andrea Costantini and Ser Filippo de Barnabo have been selected to appear as orators of this community before the Signoria, and pray that, considering the ill-effects experienced in the case of our present captain, officers of this class should no longer be allowed to trade. The two gentlemen I have named are eminently fitted for the duty assigned to them, but I have thought it good nevertheless to remind you in the name of the community of the important mission upon which they are sent, in order that you may extend to them the favour and assistance which must—we are certain—ensure success. I say no more than that we all hope that out of friendship to us you will act in this affair with your usual kindness and humanity.

"My son Vecello begs you to give him your interest in respect of the place of San Francisco, and this by way of an exchange of services, as I am ready at all times to second your wishes and consult your convenience. 'Your respectability' might write, should you think fit, to our Ser Antonio or Ser Tito to promote

this matter before our council, where everyone without a dissentient voice would agree to do what you desire.

"If 'your nobility' will write to say to whom the money should be paid, which you so courteously lent to the community, it shall instantly be disbursed with many thanks for your prompt service.

"In conclusion we beg of you to command this community; and, should this exchange of favours be carried out on both sides, it will be a proof of the utmost mutual kindness and charity in which it is our wish that God should keep you for many years.

"May 'your nobility' remain well and strong, to whom I beg to be recommended.

"Your cousin and all but brother,

"TITIANUS VECELLIUS,

"Syndic of Cadore." *

"PIEVE DI CADORE, 15*th October*, 1534."

Titian the Syndic was at the fair of Botzen when his kinsman came to Cadore. He would probably have liked to confide to his cousin personally the grievances of the community. Though not of the best patrician blood, Girolamo Zeno, then Captain of Cadore, was a man of influence, whose friends in the Venetian Senate were powerful and numerous, hence the despatch of special envoys to the capital, and their warm recommendation to the painter. It is easy to conceive that an officer commanding the castle, and bent on making his fortune might, if duly supported at Venice, venture to create a monopoly of the sale of

* From the original published on occasion of the Nozze Costantini Morosini, 8vo. Ceneda, April, 1862.

certain kinds of produce and enrich himself at the expense of the people whom he was sent to govern. Zeno, however, either trusted too much to his interest, or he underrated that of his enemies. Titian's intercession and the cleverness of the Cadorine envoys secured his defeat. The Doge in council sent orders to him to abstain from trading.

Whilst these obscure incidents absorbed the attention of the Cadorines events of greater consequence were happening in Italy. On the 25th of September Clement the Seventh died and made room for Paul the Third of the house of Farnese; and on the 31st of October Alfonso d'Este was carried off with great suddenness. On the one hand Titian lost a patron to whom he owed much of the success which attended his earlier labours, on the other hand he gained powerful friends in papal circles at Rome. But it was not immediately on the accession of Paul that Titian's relations to the family of Farnese began; and time elapsed before the princes of this clever but rapacious race learnt to value his services and condescended to court them.

Other friends meanwhile were busy promoting the master's interest. Federico Gonzaga introduced him by letter to his brother Ferrante in February, 1534, asking him for a "Rape of Proserpine" and a companion picture intended as a present to some Spanish grandee.* Peter Paul Vergerio, who had made the

* Federico Gonzaga to Titian from Mantua, February 7, 1534, in Gaye, Carteggio, ii. 252; and Benedetto Agnello to Calandra, February 14, 1534, in Appendix.

painter's acquaintance when practising law at Venice, had since become Papal Nuncio at Vienna, and wrote to Aretino from Prague in May to say he had half promised that Titian and Sansovino should visit Cardinal Cles (Glöss) in his episcopal palace at Trent; and it may be that previous to his journey to Cadore Titian accepted this invitation.* So far as we can learn, the portrait of the Cardinal of Lorraine and two pictures of women, an allegory left unfinished at the death of the Duke of Ferrara, and the "Rape of Proserpine," commissioned for Ferrante Gonzaga, were the labours to which he confined himself in 1534 and 1535.† But it is probable that these were the least of the canvases to which he set his hand. The known and the unknown are alike enshrouded in obscurity, and all that we can determine with reference to one of the former is the existence of a copy representing the rape of Proserpine, preserved as a genuine production of the master, and last exhibited at Manchester. Titian, like Giorgione, had his imitators in different schools. The copyist here reminds us that artists like Paolo Franceschi or

* Titian had promised Vergerius a picture or portrait, and Vergerius, writing to Aretino from Rome in June, 1536, says: "Sto per ritornar in Germania, e per passar per Vinegia, dove usciro d' un duro debito c' ho con la signoria vostra. Ma sollicitatemi un poco quel nostro messer Tiziano ch' egli esca meco d'uno non duro ch' è pittura, non stagno: ma farlo o non farlo, mi raccomando a lui et a vostra signoria." (Lettere a M. Pietro Aretino, *u. s.* p. 174.)

† The portrait of the Cardinal of Lorraine remained some time in Titian's hands, and was not, it would appear, ultimately claimed by its owner. See Roberto de' Rossi to Aretino, May, 1539, in Ticozzi's Vecelli, p. 106; and Bottari, Raccolta, Ticozzi's Edition, vol. v. 228.

Christopher Schwarz might oftener succeed in a close reproduction of technical tricks familiar to Schiavone or Tintoretto than in a faithful rendering of Titian's sweetness and gorgeousness of tone.*

Towards the close of 1534, Titian wrote very humbly to excuse himself for not accepting Cardinal Ippolito de' Medici's renewed invitation to Rome. He begged the Cardinal's chamberlain to assure his master of Titian's dutiful regard, and promised to send him a picture of a lady, which had already been seen and coveted by the Cardinal of Lorraine.† This proud and powerful churchman greatly flattered the painter by his visit, and equally flattered Aretino by a similar condescension; his reward in the first instance being a portrait of which contemporaries said wonders, in the second a letter in which Aretino praised the prelate "as a prince in the disguise of a Cardinal, who scented more of the purple than the frock." ‡

Meanwhile the "triumvirate" continued to flourish, pleasantly reinforced, as occasion required, by Serlio the architect, Anichini the carver of cameos, and the humanist Fortunio Spira. Though frequently provoked by the eccentricities of Aretino, the carelessness of Sansovino, and the utter neglect of his promises which characterized Titian, the doge Andrea

* The "Rape of Proserpine," exhibited at Manchester, and numbered in the Catalogue of the great Manchester Exhibition as 235, was on canvas, and belonged to Mr. J. Evelyn Denison. There was a picture with this subject in the Mantuan Palace in 162-. Darco, Arti, &c., *u. s.*, ii. 159.

† See Titian to Vendramo, Dec. 20, 1534, in Ticozzi, Vecelli, 307.

‡ Aretino to Cardinal of Lorraine, Venice, Nov. 21, 1534, in Lettere di M. P. Aretino, i. 33 v.

Gritti seldom withdrew his countenance from any of them, and once only took a sly pleasure in setting the confederates by the ears. In 1534 he had ordered Sansovino to rebuild San Francesco della Vigna, and in anticipation of its completion had caused a medal to be struck in which the edifice, with its cupola and tower, were carefully represented.* The Franciscans who watched the progress of the works thought they detected some deviations from the model, and complained to the Doge. A commission was appointed with the friar Francesco Giorgi at its head, to inquire into the truth of their allegation; and the result was a long and learned Vitruvian report dated April 25, 1535, finding fault with measurements and acoustic properties, which Titian, Serlio, and Spira, who were members of the commission, signed.† But Sansovino gave little attention to rebuffs clothed in affected and hyperbolical language, and treated the opinion of his friends with haughty neglect. The lesson which he ought to have taken now, was given to him later; and he subsequently paid the penalty of unpardonable negligence by fine and imprisonment.

It was of his own free choice that Titian thus busied himself with matters of purely local interest. Charles the Fifth had repeatedly asked him to Spain,‡ and would perhaps have taken him on the glorious expedition in which he overcame Barbarossa and captured Tunis. But Titian had no longing for

* See a print of the medal in Temenza's Sansovino.

† Compare Selvatico, Sull' Architettura, pp. 281–2, with Cicogna, Iscriz. Ven., iii. 308.

‡ Aretino to Lione Aretino, July 11, 1539, in Lettere a M. P. Aretino, ii. p. 86.

adventure, and preferred the air of the lagoons, occasionally varied with the breezes of the Alps, to the fatigues of African travel; and Charles was fain to content himself with the services of Vermeyen, who produced, with laborious difficulty and doubtful success, the pictures of the Emperor's victories which adorn the fortress of Coburg or lie mouldering in the magazines of the Belvedere at Vienna.* At ease and at home, Titian contented himself with attending to the wants of the Duke of Mantua, whilst far away in the south of Italy death was making sudden harvest of one of his patrons. During the preparations of the Emperor for his campaign in Africa the rivals Alessandro and Ippolito de' Medici had been intriguing against each other in Spain. It was not Charles' intention to take any decisive course with regard to Florence before his return from Africa. The agents of the Medici had been put off in consequence with evasions. But Ippolito thought he would be able to compass his object by joining the Emperor in person, and in July 1535 he started for Naples with the fixed intention of urging his suit with Charles in person. He was poisoned at Itri on the 13th of August by his own cup-bearer, hired by Alessandro de' Medici for that purpose. His death cast an unmistakable gloom over the meetings of the triumvirate, which lost in a single hour one of its most generous protectors.

Whilst mourning over the loss of this benefactor

* Pinchart, in the Revue universelle des Arts, gives the dates of Vermeyen's employment (iii. p. 137).

Titian received a letter from the Duke of Mantua, who had long been wishing for a "Magdalen," and now desired a picture of a "Christ." *

FEDERICO GONZAGA TO TITIAN AT VENICE.

"EXCELLENT AND DEAREST FRIEND,

"You once gave me an image of Christ which pleased me so much that I wish to have another like it. Pray set to work at this with the care and diligence which you know how to apply when the honour of your craft is concerned. I should like the piece to be as fine and as perfect as its immediate precursor, which I should call one of Titian's best; and I desire to have it next September at the feast of the Madonna.

"MANTUA, *Aug.* 3, 1535." †

Titian's best, and a replica which should do the painter honour, would be well worth seeing now. We ask in vain what became of it, or why it was ordered by the Duke of Mantua.

A month, we observe, was the time considered requisite by Gonzaga to produce a perfect Titian. Not a trace in the Mantuan inventories—no sign in the catalogues of Charles the First. In public or private galleries no "Christ" executed in these years.

The following winter saw Titian finally busy at the portrait of the Emperor which had so long been

* See Agnello to Calandra, May 9, 1534, in Appendix.

† This letter is dated 1536 in Gaye, but republished with the date corrected to 1535, in Darco. (Gaye, ii. 262–3; Darco, Pitt. di Mant., ii. 122.) The feast of the Madonna is Sept. 8.

promised and so constantly withheld. The Duke of Mantua wrote to the painter at the end of April to tell him: "He not only wanted the likeness of the Emperor but Titian himself pressingly;" * and Titian had replied, through Agnello, that he would send the likeness instantly, though he could not say when he could come to Mantua.† Federico hoped to see Charles the Fifth on his progress to the North; whose portrait would then fitly decorate a room of his palace, and he could not hope to receive the portrait quicker than by asking Titian himself to bring it. Charles had returned from his African campaign to Sicily. He landed at Trapani in August, 1535, received a brilliant welcome at Messina, and spent the winter at Naples.‡ In April, 1536, he came through Rome; and his triumphal entry into Florence in May gave employment to all the artists of Tuscany. On the 16th of May he visited Fornovo, where, forty years before, Francesco Gonzaga had lost a battle to the French, and passing from thence to Asti, where troops were assembling for a new expedition, he meditated the invasion of France. Two months before, Francis the First had sent his armies into Savoy and reduced the whole of Piedmont. But Antonio da Leyva had been sent to retrieve these losses, and had cleared the peninsula of the enemy, and when he presented himself before his master at Asti, he was able to boast that except the French garrison of Turin, there were

* Federico to Titian, April 27, 1536, in Gaye, Carteggio, ii. 262.

† See the Letter in Appendix.

‡ Lanz., *u. s.*, ii. 204, and following.

no Frenchmen in Italy. On Leyva's arrival he found the Duke of Mantua in camp, accompanied by Titian, who had joined his party at Mantua, and was received at court with the utmost favour.

BENEDETTO AGNELLO TO THE MARCHIONESS ISABELLA AT MANTUA.

"Titian is not here. Some days ago he left this for Mantua, and went with the Duke to court. He will return with the Duke to Mantua, where your Excellency will see him sooner than I shall, and can speak to him of the portrait of Zurinelli, and order him to send it when he reaches this.

"From VENICE, *May* 5, 1536." *

TITIAN TO ARETINO AT VENICE.

"SIGNOR COMPAR,

"I kissed the hand of Don Alvise Davila, who said he was your friend, and begged me to tell you he would soon prove it. I would have done the same by Signor Antonio da Leva, but that there was no time. He came to see the Emperor, and only staid half a day, and there were so many visitors that I could not kiss his hand. But should we meet I shall do my duty, and attend to your interests without regard to the consequences. No more on this head. Here nothing is heard but the roll of drums, and everyone is starting for France. I hope soon to be with you, when we shall have much to say to each

* See the original in Appendix.

other. *Bas las manos a vuestra merced* and also those of Alvise Anichini.*

"From ASTI, *May* 31, 1536."

At Asti, it would seem, Titian was quite in Spanish waters. He doubtless met, perhaps he again portrayed, the Emperor. But his special friends were Don Luigi Davila, Gonzalo Perez, and Domenico Gaztelu, all of whom were secretaries and confidential friends of Covos, Commander of Castile. After the campaign in Provence, which was short and unsatisfactory, Davila and Perez followed the Emperor's court to Genoa, and embarked with it in November for Spain: Gaztelu remained at Venice, and the favours of the Emperor were distributed through him to Titian and Aretino. From his cabin on board a galley at Genoa, Perez wrote to Aretino: "I read your letter to the Emperor and gave it to the *comendator mayor* (Covos), who showed the very best feeling for you and Titian, to whom the favour was done of which you will have heard from Signor Domingo (Gaztelu)." Aretino replied (Dec. 20.): "Titian will paint your portrait, and with it abate the claims which death may have upon your person;" and Perez, not to be outdone in Castilian courtesy, kissed Titian's hands from Valladolid.† The favour conferred on Titian, hardly out-

* This letter, dated "ultimo Marzo," in Lettere a P. Aretino, i. p. 146, is reprinted in Ticozzi (Vecelli, p. 309), with the more correct "ultimo Maggio."

† Perez to Aretino, "da Galera cerca de Villafranca, Nov. 16, 1536;" and Valladolid, March 3, 1537, in Lettere a M. P. Aretino, *u. s.*, ii. 337–338; and Aretino to Perez, in Lettere di M. P. A., i. 65.

weighed we may think by that which he did to Perez by painting his likeness, was predestined to a long postponement. In order to strengthen the dubious allegiance of Francesco Sforza, Duke of Milan, Charles the Fifth, in 1531, had promised him the hand of Cristina of Denmark. Though never such an ill-assorted pair had been selected for marriage, he being old and sickly, and she but nine years old on the day of her betrothal, still the wedding was solemnized with pomp in January 1534, and the newly-married couple entered Milan in state. It were greatly to be desired that some graphic mementos, such as the portraits of the Duke and Duchess, which Titian was deputed to paint, had been preserved. Lomazzo describes the Duke after Titian's likeness; pale, worn, and bent, his hair white and hoary, his beard raven black.* Historians tell us that the Duchess was a plain but clever girl of twelve. Sforza hardly lived two years after this. At his death on the 20th of November, 1535, his Duchy lapsed to Charles the Fifth. Titian received a promise of a canonicate for his son, and a grant of a pension on the treasury of Naples, which for many years was never paid; and thus the "favour" of the Emperor, of Covos, and Gonzalo Perez was postponed *ad Kalendas Græcas.*†

* Lomazzo, Trattato, p. 633; see also Ridolfi, Mar., i. 251. Rubens copied this picture. See the inventory of the copies from Titian which he left behind; Sainsbury, p. 238.

† Titian, in a letter to the Emperor, complains (? 1555) that his pension on Milan, and likewise a grant of corn from Naples, had never yielded him a penny. (See Ticozzi, Vecelli, p. 310.) Aretino received a similar pension on the 15th of June, 1536. See Antonio

Meanwhile the death of Alfonso d'Este had not altogether disturbed the relations of Titian with the Ferrarese court, nor had Tebaldi, after the accession of Ercole the Second, ceased to visit the workshop of his old master's favourite painter. Though Ercole had not the same regard for Titian as his father, and was subsequently led by circumstances of which we have no adequate explanation to patronise Pordenone, he had still too much respect for Alfonso's good opinion of Titian to neglect so great an artist. In earlier days he had been one of Titian's sitters; and he was well aware that a portrait of Alfonso still lay unfinished on Titian's easel. One of his first acts, therefore, was to send 50 ducats to Venice as an earnest to the painter that he desired the completion of the likeness which was to replace that of Alfonso carried off to Spain through the wile of Covos.* It is characteristic alike of the value which Ercole set on his alliance with the court of France and Titian's wish to represent Alfonso faithfully, that "the order of France" was sent to Tebaldi for Titian's use, with instructions to Titian to copy it for the Duke's portrait. Tebaldi reported, on the 15th of December, 1536, that the picture was finished, and as like "as water to water." So beautiful, too, that he wondered his Excellency had shown so little eagerness to see it. But Ercole was in no hurry. He allowed the canvas

Capelli's "Aretino" in Atti delle R. R. Deputazioni per le prov. Modenesi, 4to, Modena, 1866, p. 85.

* The payment of 50 ducats is dated July 20, 1535. (See Campori, Tiziano e gli Estensi, p. 24.)

to remain in Tebaldi's lodgings, and waited till he came in person to Venice in January to form an independent judgment. But then he confessed his admiration, and paid handsomely; and Titian admitted to Aretino that he had never been more royally treated.* It is melancholy to register, not only the loss of this masterpiece, but the disappearance also of the portrait of Ercole, which was preserved at Ferrara long enough to be copied by the faithful hand of Girolamo da Carpi.† In the absence of such works as these, we might feel unable to realise the manner in which Titian captivated high-born sitters; but that ample illustrations of his style are found in the noble portraits of the Duke and Duchess of Urbino at the Uffizi, which were executed in 1537.

In Francesco Maria's face as depicted by the greatest master of the time, there is perhaps more expression of character than in the earliest of Alfonso of Este; and we look at the large black eye, the hooked nose, and projecting jaw, with the perfect certainty that the owner of those features was a man of quick action and violent passions. Francesco Maria came of a strong-minded mother, being the son of Giovanna of Montefeltro, who so bravely, though hopelessly, made head against Cesar Borgia. Flying in disguise from the Castle of Sinigaglia, Giovanna had once left her son in charge of Andrea Doria, and

* He received 200 scudi. *Ibid.*, and Aretino to Buonleo, Jan. 6, $\frac{1537}{1538}$ in Lettere di M. P. Aretino, i. p. 8.

† Vasari, xi. 236.

afterwards sent him to the court of France, where he learnt the rules of chivalry as practised in the sixteenth century by Gaston de Foix. Heir by adoption to the throne of Urbino, Francesco murdered the lover of his sister at the age of seventeen. At thirty he drew on Cardinal Alidosio, and ran him through the body. Twice he lost his duchy, and twice he won it back at the point of the sword. A favourite of the Venetians and Charles the Fifth, he was one of the few Italian generals who combined technical knowledge with bravery and rapidity of execution. He could ride like Charles the Twelfth, taking horse at Pesaro for Naples, thence to Capo d' Istria, and back to Pesaro. He was short, stout, and wiry, but of bilious aspect, his head and chin covered with thick, short, curly hair, all fat trained off of him by exercise, his fine cut nose spanned with a slight membrane of flesh, the eyes black and penetrant, the lower eyelids hanging like purses over a tanned gaunt cheek. He had just returned from Capo d' Istria, by way of Pesaro, to Venice, when the Pope, the Emperor, and Venice signed the league of January 31, 1537, against the Turks. He was generalissimo under orders to assume command when Titian was called to paint his likeness. We see him with the plumed helmet and the emblems of his rank in the background of a semi-circular niche covered with red damasked velvet. The steel armour in which his muscular frame is encased stands out a marvel of cool bright polish in front of the niche, whilst his head is turned to the right, and relieved in

light against the brown wall of a room. His martial aspect is enhanced by the firmness of his pose, the staff with his arms, which he holds in his right hand, and rests on his hip, and the batons, with the tiara and keys, and the motto "Se Sibi," which are displayed behind him. "TITIANVS, F.," in gold letters, is written in the shadow of the niche to the left. The form is snatched from nature, and transferred to canvas with a master-hand, bringing out the planes of a bony face in sallow olive tones, and showing the bile that lurked beneath the skin with the same subtlety as the reflexions in the burnished armour, combining a marked touch with nice blending, and working off with varied surface in tempered atmosphere, the flesh and stuffs and steel and plumes.*

Eleonora Gonzaga, sister to the Duke of Mantua and wife of Francesco Maria, accompanied her husband to share the pomp of his new dignity at Venice.† She was a woman of perfect shape but slender figure, with fine cut features and glancing eyes shaded by long and dark eyelashes. Her type of beauty, we might fancy, was that which afterwards fascinated Cinq-Mars when he courted Marie de Gon-

* This is a half length of life-size on canvas. It passed, like so many other pictures of the same kind, from Urbino to Florence by the extinction of the male line of the Roveres. It is numbered 605 at the Uffizi, and was discovered in the "Guardaroba" of the palace of the Grand Dukes by the Director Puccini. See Puccini to Cicogna, in the latter's MS. notes to an edition of Morelli's Anonimo, *u. s.* There is a patch of restoring on the upper left edge of the canvas.

† The Duchess came to Venice in September, 1536, and returned to Urbino, by way of Mantua, in July, 1537. See Bembo to Pietro Pamfili, in Bembo, P. Opere, vol. vii. pp. 313—14 and 316.

zague at the Louvre, and Titian immortalised it as the Princess sat unconsciously claiming the homage of admirers. Her look is stately, yet subdued. Her delicate ringed hands are at rest, one of them on the arm of a chair. At her side a table with a rich green cloth supports a lap-dog and a chased metal clock, whilst the reflex of an afternoon sun sheds a mild light through an open casement. Outside, the sky is pure and lightly flecked with clouds, and a haze rests upon the distance of a verdant landscape. To make the difference apparent between the blanched complexion of a dame accustomed to luxury and ease and the tanned face of a soldier habitually exposed to the weather, Titian skilfully varied the detail of technical execution. Here he is minute and finished, there resolute and broad. Here the tinted and throbbing flesh is pitted against a warm light ground, there the sallow olive against a dark wall. The dress of the Duchess, though low and square cut so as to show the throat and bosom, is fringed with a ruff-fraise, contrasting alike with the fair skin and the dark warm stuff of the gown, the sleeves of which are puffed and slashed with yellow. A chain hangs round the neck and supports a jewel, whilst a tasseled girdle encircles the waist. In this "divine" likeness we discern the painter's tact, which conceals in part the inroads of time upon the sitter. Eleonora being turned of thirty, covered her head with a matron's cap. Her fair flesh had lost the roses of youth and formed a purse at the chin. But Titian, with delicate handling and subtle modelling, makes the

Princess young again, shows the blood mantling in her cheek, and her eyes glistening with vitality.*

The high-born public of Venice was charmed by the excellence of these masterpieces, which found expression in the sonnets of Aretino. But the praise of the bard was not wrung from him by the chink of golden pieces. It was an admiration truly felt, though suggested to the "Scourge of Princes" by Veronica Gambara, the friend of the Estes and Charles the Fifth, and patroness of Correggio. In the letter in which he incloses his sonnets "to Veronica," and in the sonnets themselves, Aretino strikes the nail on the head repeatedly when he speaks of the Duke's likeness, and dwells on "the fierce grandeur of the brow, the spirited look of the eye, and the ready action of the arm." Every wrinkle, he truly says, every hair is realised; and the colours divulge not alone the life in the flesh, but the manliness of the soul within. The burnished armour, too, takes the redness of the velvet behind it, and magic are the reflexes of the helmet and plume on the surface of the breastplate. Even the emblems of command are natural, "and who shall say that the batons granted by Florence, Venice, and the Church" are not of silver? Happy, again, is the description of Eleonora as a chaste and lovely apparition, with grace on her brow and command in her glance.†

* This canvas was found by Puccini in the garrets of the Grand Duke's palace three years after he had rescued the portrait of the Duke. It is also a half length, numbered 599 at the Uffizi. Consult Vasari, xiii. 32, and Lomazzo, Idea del Tempio, pp. 116—17. Photograph by Alinari.

† This letter, dated Nov. 7

Not many months were to elapse after the despatch of this epistle, and the Duke of Urbino was to die, leaving his widow to conjecture darkly who had poisoned him, who robbed her of her lord.

The divisions of party were so subtle, and princes were so unscrupulous in those days, that it was no wonder that Francesco Maria should have been despatched by the secret and certain method of poisoning. There were so many examples of a safe application of this method that the temptation to use it was very great. Murder was a familiar resource of kings, why not of princes? On the 18th of December, 1536, Aretino wrote to Alessandro de' Medici almost to warn him of his approaching assassination. "God keep you," he said, "from the steel and poison of treason." * On the 5th of the following January Alessandro was murdered. The Duke of Urbino preparing to fight the Turks as generalissimo for Paul the Third, Venice and the Emperor would have numerous enemies; Guido Rangone, for instance, who was the Pope's general, and jealous of command, and all the partisans of France. France, at this time in alliance with Soliman, and active in its intrigues at Venice, was not without friends even amongst the members of the triumvirate. Montmorency the *connétable* offered Aretino a yearly pension of 400 scudi if he would write in favour of Francis the

1537, is valuable, as it fixes the date of the completion of the portraits. See Lettere di M. P. Aretino, i. 179.

* Aretino to Alessandro de' Medici. Lettere di M. P. Aretino, i. p. 64.

First, and Aretino replied accepting the offer. Comitolo, the agent of Guido Rangone in France, was the person who negotiated the bribe, and he was an intimate friend of Titian, Sansovino, and Anichini,* whilst Aretino and his two colleagues in the Triumvirate were gossips or *compare* of Guido Rangone.† But we shall not be wrong in supposing that, whatever the stains may be which attach to Aretino for his advocacy of every party that paid him, a similar blemish is not to be found in the painters who worked for each of these parties in turn. "Artists," says an able critic, "might claim the privilege of exercising their talents with a sublime indifference to politics.‡"

Titian's close connection with the Duke and Duchess of Urbino in 1537 had, as a natural consequence, renewed intimacy with their most confidential adviser, Pietro Bembo. Since the days of the Aldine Club, and the transfer of his residence to Rome, Bembo had apparently neglected the master whom he once tempted in vain to visit Rome. After the death of Leo the Tenth, in 1522, he retired to Padua, where he lived on his sinecures and a salary from the Venetian Republic. That a man who was fond of art and possessed the best gallery of pictures and antiques

* See Hieronimo Comitolo to Aretino, May 17, 1537 (erroneously printed 1534), in Lettere a M. P. Aretino, p. 222, and same to same from Paris, June 1, 1537, ibid. p. 223. In both these letters Comitolo sends greetings to Titian. See also Aretino to Montmorency, June 8, 1537, in Lettere di M. P. Aretino, p. 112.

† Guido Rangone was made General of the Pope in Nov. 1536. In a letter of that date Aretino (Lettere di M. P. Aretino, i. p. 62) boasts that Titian and Sansovino are Rangone's "*compari.*"

‡ Quarterly Review, vol. lxvi. No. cxxxi. p. 17.

known to exist in the sixteenth century should have remained so long estranged from Titian is curious. But it may be, either that the proud nature of the humanist could not pardon what he considered incivility or contempt in the painter, or his habitual preference for the works of Raphael and Michelangelo, with both of whom he had been personally acquainted, prevented him from cultivating the friendship of Titian. Early in 1537, having some disagreement with Leone Leoni the sculptor of Arezzo, whom he had employed to make a die for a medal, at Rome, the latter complained to his relative, Aretino, that Bembo was neglecting him for Benvenuto Cellini. Aretino's answer is at once a rebuke to Leoni and evidence of a friendly current of feeling between the Triumvirate and Bembo. The taste of the humanist, he said, was too accomplished to warrant the belief that he could fail to prize at its just value a work of art of which Titian and Sansovino were sincere admirers.* We may conclude the more confidently that Bembo at this time sat to the painter, as we find him, in 1540, writing to Girolamo Quirini to acknowledge the receipt "of his second portrait by Titian."† We doubt whether the "first portrait" has been preserved. But if the profile in the collection of the Nardi family at Venice be in truth a likeness of Bembo, it certainly must have been a replica executed about the period with which we are busy.‡ Bene-

* Aretino to Leone Leoni, May 25, 1537, in Lett. di M. P. Aretino, i. 103-4.

† Bembo to Quirini, May 30, 1540, in Bembo, Opere, vi. p. 316.

‡ Vasari would lead us to be-

detto Varchi wrote to Benvenuto Cellini in 1536 that Bembo had just begun to let his beard grow, and Cellini expressed his great satisfaction at a change which made the face most picturesque.* The Nardi portrait, no doubt originally painted for Jacopo Nardi, the friend and gossip of Titian,† is a half-length with a characteristic head shorn of hair, but long of beard. A high forehead, gaunt cheeks, and an aquiline nose; the right hand holding a glove, the dress a black flowered silk, complete a picture reduced by time, corrosion, and cleaning to the semblance of a tinted monochrome.

On the back of the old canvas, and beneath a new one pasted over the first, we read the curious inscription, "P. Bembo, fecit, an° dom 15 . . ." There can be no doubt of the originality of this work, which unmistakeably reveals the hand of Titian; but it hardly resembles the bust by Cataneo on the monument erected to the Cardinal in the Santo of Padua, which may be due to the fact that Bembo sat to Titian, whilst Cataneo moulded his bust after the Cardinal's death.‡

In Bembo's museum at Padua, which was well

lieve that Titian painted Bembo's likeness before 1513 (xiii. 27). If this be true the likeness is missing.

* Cellini to Varchi, Rome, Sept. 9, 1536, in Bottari's Raccolta, i. pp. 15, 16.

† See, further on, Priscianese's account of an evening with Titian.

‡ See the bust in the Santo of Padua, of which there is a drawing in Gonzati's Basilica, ii. 172. See also Aretino to Danese Cataneo, April, 1548, in Lett. di M. P. Aretino, iv. 205. The Nardi picture was seen by the authors in the studio of Signor Vason at Venice. It is a half-length, large as life.

known to most Italian artists and antiquaries, Titian probably first saw some of the antiques which served as a groundwork for the celebrated series of Roman Emperors, which he now began for the Duke of Mantua. Giulio Romano, in 1536, had completed the "Sala di Troja" in the Castello of Mantua, and made considerable progress with the apartments in its vicinity, when it occurred to Federico Gonzaga to devote one entire room to the portraits of twelve Cæsars, and to employ Titian to paint them.* Besides the undoubted antiques in Bembo's museum, which represented Julius Cæsar, Domitian, and Caracalla, Titian would have statues of all the Emperors from Cæsar to Probus, and numerous medals in the Gallery of Mantua to refer to, and from these it was competent to him to make the designs which this large, if not novel, undertaking required.† In March, 1537, Federico wrote to Titian to say that the rooms in the Castello, which were to be hung with his pictures, would be ready in May, and he hoped that this would be an incentive to him to be industrious and punctual.‡ He also sent the painter a present of a dress, which Titian acknowledged in the following letter.

* See Darco, Delle Arti di Mantova, ii. 112, 123, 153, and 173. See also the same author's Life of Giulio Romano, fol., Mant. 1843, pp. 91 and 98; and letters of July 10, 1536, and April 3, 1537, in Appendix.

† Daniel Nys to Secretary Lord Dorchester, July $\frac{1}{2}\frac{0}{9}$, 1629, in Sainsbury's Papers relative to Rubens, *u. s.*, pp. 275 and 332, and Inventory of 1627 at Mantua, by Darco, delle Arti, ii. 169. See also in Dolce's Dialogo (p. 68), "dipinse i dodici Cesari traendogli parte dalle medaglie parte da marmi antichi."

‡ Federico to Titian, from Mantua, March 26, 1537, in Gaye, Carteggio, ii. 264.

TITIAN TO THE DUKE FEDERICO GONZAGA, AT MANTUA.

"MOST ILLUSTRIOUS, &c.,—

"It was not necessary for your Excellency to remind me by letter or the gift of a rich cassock of the pictures, which I have altogether at heart, knowing as I do under what obligation I am for many kindnesses. But since your Excellency has been pleased to do so, I beg to return my best thanks for favour and guerdon, and kiss your Excellency's hands a thousand times. Many days have passed since I gave one of the pictures to the ambassador to send to your Excellency. Five others are in a fair way, which I shall finish on hearing that the first was satisfactory, or the reverse, regulating my work accordingly. And so I shall proceed by degrees to the end, when I shall hope to have well served your Excellency. In the meantime, it would be a great favour to me if your Excellency would liberate my benefice from the pension payable upon it, which, besides causing me a loss in money which I pay out yearly, creates not a little trouble and disturbance because of the persons with whom I am pestered, out of whose hands your Excellency alone can save me. I beg, I supplicate your Excellency to do this which alone would suffice to make me your Excellency's perpetual slave.

"From VENICE, *April* 6, 1537." *

On the 10th of April the Duke acknowledged the

* See the original in Appendix.

receipt of the Emperor Augustus, which he hoped would soon be followed by the rest of the series;* and then the correspondence ceased. It is not known when the room was hung with the Cæsars and adorned with its illustrative pictures by Giulio Romano. It is enough to say that Titian was true to his promise in so far that he painted eleven canvases, and allowed the twelfth to be executed by Giulio;† and Vasari thought the collection more than good. But the judgment of later critics was less frigid than that of the Aretine, and the popularity of the Cæsars is proved not only by the prints of Sadeler, but by the copies which Bernardino Campi executed in 1562 for Francesco d'Avalos, the Emperor, and others, and those which Agostino Caracci made for Ranuccio Farnese. In 1628 Daniel Nys shipped the whole of the original canvases to England, where they served to adorn the gallery of Charles the First, at the dispersal of which, in the time of the Commonwealth, the Cæsars were given "by the State" to the Spanish Ambassador.‡ Of the five successive copies made by Campi, one remains in the

* Gaye, Carteggio, ii. 264.

† Vasari, xiii. 31, and x. 106; and Inventory by Darco, Pitture di Mantova, *u. s.*, p. 153.

‡ Caracci's copies were in the Palace of Parma till 1734 (Campori, Cataloghi, 205 & 207). The originals, restored by Borgani in 1611, are noted in the Inventory of Mantua of 1527 (Darco, Pitt., *u. s.*, i. 80, and ii. 153). Their transfer to England is vouched for by the records in Sainsbury. The gift of them to the Spanish Ambassador in London is noted in the Egerton MS., 1636, at the British Museum, of which extracts were given by Mr. J. J. Cartwright in the Academy for April 18, 1874. Earlier copies than those of Campi and Caracci are noted in a will of 1580, in which Ippolito Capilupi, Bishop of Fano, bequeaths them to his nephew Camillo (Darco, Pitt. di Mantova, ii. 112).

Davalos Palace at Naples.* The rest are missing, and it is a mere conjecture that one of them may be found in a collection said to exist in the Royal Palace at Munich.† Julius Cæsar, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, Galba, and Otho, ascribed to Titian, and exhibited, as the property of Mr. Abraham Hume, at Manchester, are old, but not Venetian, copies.‡ Dr. Waagen acknowledged as genuine an "Otho" belonging to Earl Brownlow, and a head of Julius Cæsar belonging to Mr. Tomline of Orwell Park; though Julius at the best is but a study for a larger picture.§ No single example amongst the many alleged to have belonged to this remarkable series deserves more attention than the so-called Vitellius, which passed through the galleries of Queen Christine and the Duke of Orleans, before it was purchased by Cosway and sold to Lord Northwick. The companion piece, which went with the Vitellius, and represents Vespasian, is a counterpart of the same Cæsar in Sadeler's print; but the Vitellius differs from every one of the figures which Sadeler engraved, though of all the pictures of this class assigned to the master, it is most worthy of Titian's name. The Emperor is represented in profile to the right, holding the baton of command in his hand, his dress of orange-yellow being partly covered by a green mantle. The hand

* The copies in the Davalos Palace are very poor, yet Davalos rewarded the painter with a pension. Those made by Campi for the Emperor, the Duke of Alva, and "Ringomes," are missing. See Lamo's Life of Campi, 8vo, Cremona, 1774, p. 68.

† Vasari, xiii., note to 31.

‡ Nos. 220–5 in the Manchester Catalogue.

§ Waagen, Treasures, ii. 313, and iii. 443. These canvases were not seen by the authors.

alone preserves its original character, and looks like the work of the master. The Vespasian appears to be spurious, because it was either a copy from the beginning or it was subsequently daubed over with modern pigment.* If we should venture to criticise these Cæsars by the light of Sadeler's prints, they might be described as decorative work bordering on the grotesque and theatrical. They are all half-lengths in panoplies, wreathed with laurel, and wielding batons of command. The attitudes are forced, and in many instances unnatural.† Yet there may have been qualities in the originals which atoned for the defects apparent in the plates, and it is possible that their affected bombast was mitigated when seen on the walls of the Mantuan Castello. They pleased the Duke. They met with respectful if not enthusiastic admiration from Vasari, and Lomazzo certainly considered them appropriate, whilst Agostino Caracci praised them as the *non plus ultra* of classical adaptation. When Vincenzo Gonzaga sold them surreptitiously to Daniel Nys, his subjects were deeply grieved. The mere rumour of their recovery led the Mantuans to a public demonstration, and great was their indignation when they discovered that

* Both these canvases were in the Orleans and Christine Galleries (see Campori's Cataloghi, p. 352, and Waagen's Treasures, ii. 497). They were sold at the Orleans sale for 20*l.* to Mr. Cosway.

† The prints were published in four sheets, each of which contained three Emperors. They are numbered I. to XII., and inscribed Aegidius Sadeler. M. Scul. Titianus invenit. The Emperors are: Julius Cæsar, D. Oct. Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, Nero, Galba, Otho, Vitellius, Vespasian, Titus, and Domitian.

the treasure had sailed in the good ship "Margaret" from Malamocco to England.*

During the progress of these labours Titian and Aretino both made energetic and repeated efforts to realize some of the promises of the Emperor. Titian begged of Federico Gonzaga to support his claim on the treasury of Naples, which the Duke consented to do by means of his brother, the Cardinal of Mantua. Gonzalo Perez was asked to press Davila in the same cause, and Davila consented to write to Cardinal Carraciolo to urge the painter's demands on the Neapolitan exchequer.† But all the correspondence was wasted, and the arts of the triumvirate would have failed to extract a single ducat from the Emperor's agents, had not Aretino suggested to Titian an ingenious method of compassing his object in another way. Amongst the finished pictures which lay unsold in the painter's studio was an "Annunciation" ordered for the church of Santa Maria degli Angeli of Murano. The nuns of the convent had protested against Titian's charge of 500 scudi, and refused to accept the altar-piece at such a price. Aretino proposed the despatch of the canvas to the Empress, and the fortunate result was a present from the Emperor of 2000 scudi.‡ The public was ingeniously made acquainted with

* Compare Vas. Annot., xiii. 31; Lomazzo, Trattato, p. 432; and Cardinal Pietro Campori to Abbate Fontana, from Cremona, May 19, 1629, in Campori's Lettere Inedite, p. 100.

† See Ticozzi, Extracts from Liruti's Notizie delle vite dei letterati del Friuli (Vecelli, p. 181).

‡ Vasari, xiii. p. 30, and Ridolfi, Marav. i. 223.

this transaction by an open letter from Aretino to Titian, in which the subject was described and eulogised, and the painter and friend were vindicated from a popular charge. It had been said that Titian could only paint portraits, and Aretino distil spite. The letter would prove that both accusations were unfounded.* In the course of centuries the "Annunciation" perished in Spain. But Caralio's print preserved its principal features, which are a Virgin listening with modest reverence, Gabriel bending to Mary; a rainbow in a sky peopled with angels, two of whom carry a pillar with Charles the Fifth's device "Plus ultra."

Titian, the greatest colourist of his age, and one of the noblest representatives of an art which has not its equal for subtlety, appears to us at this time as a master who achieved all that can be expected of human exertion. Acknowledged by his contemporaries as unequalled in skill, he enjoyed a position almost unparalleled in the history of his profession. Except Alberti, Raphael, and Michaelangelo, no artist had ever acquired such a position. Unlike Alberti, whose relations were confined to the small though select circle of Florentine humanists, he had friends in every class. Unlike Raphael, who perished in the flower of his youth, he had outlived the age of pleasures, and socially had learnt to give as well as to take. Unlike Michaelangelo, whose sublime genius

* Aretino to Titian, Nov. 9, 1537, in Lettere di M. P. Aretino, p. 180.

in art was recognised as fully as his poetic feeling and profound learning, he was fond of society and not insensible to its enjoyments. He had the faculty which so few men possess, of charming his contemporaries, to whatever grade they might belong, and if he had enemies it was because envy had not ceased to be a vice of the time. There was not an artist in Venice who could hope to equal him, and no one has more felicitously expressed himself than Vasari when he remarks: "Titian had rivals in Venice, but none of much talent, none that he did not crush by his excellence and his knowledge of the world in converse with gentlemen." * Titian, in fact, was more particularly distinguished from the great mass of the artists of his day, by a quality which has always been considered rare. He was and remained a gentleman.

Titian at sixty imparted to his art not only the outward semblance but the secret, and to many unrevealed, subtleties of nature. It was an art which displayed the charm whilst it concealed the realism; not an imitation only, but an embodiment of results attained by analysis of cause and effect, telling what Nature tells in Nature's mysterious hidden way. Men of all periods, from his own to the present time, recognised this quality in Titian, which, however, only came to perfection like some flowers, in autumn. In 1538, when Lodovico Dolce dedicated his paraphrase of Juvenal's Sixth Satire to the painter, he prized the poet's art above that of Titian, inasmuch

* Vasari, xiii. p. 45.

as he conceived that Titian's portrait, though perfect, still lacked the breath of life, whereas Juvenal's picture was not the semblance, but life itself. Other writers went further.* There had been a time, as Vasari truly said, when the master finished his works with such care and minuteness that they bore inspection at any distance. At a later period his touches and brush strokes were ill suited for a close inspection, but at the focus they were perfectly effective, and so stupendously clever that the scenes appeared to be real.† "Three lives," says Pino, "has Titian, one natural, one artificial, the third eternal."‡ "All that Titian's figures want," cries Biondo, "is a voice; in all else they are nature itself." § "Nature," says Ridolfi, "surrendered to Titian and took its laws from his pencil." ‖ "In every thing," exclaims Boschini, "Titian's art was similar to nature. Milk feeds his babes; he weaves the stuffs; by him the arms are wrought. He transfers the trees, the hills, and plains to his picture; his animals have but just issued from the ark; and his joy or grief are alike infectious. So long as Nature lives Titian will also live. He was the very mirror of nature, only that the mirror reflects whilst Titian creates." ¶ "In imitating nature," Armenini concludes, "Titian was

* The dedication, dated Padua, Oct. 10, 1538, was published with the satire (Ven. presso Curzio Navò) in 1538. It is reprinted in A. Maier, Della Imitazione pittorica, &c., 8vo, Ven. 1818, p. 346.

† Vasari, xiii. p. 39.

‡ Pino (P.), Dialogo di Pittura, 8vo, Venice, 1548, p. 41.

§ Michel Angelo Biondo, Della Nobilissima Pittura, Venice, 1549, cap. 17.

‖ Ridolfi, Marav. i. 195.

¶ Boschini, Miniere, Preface (1664).

unsurpassed." * In this and other respects Titian indeed excelled, and there is not in all the north of Italy a single artist, Venetian or Lombard, whose skill can compare with his. But the marvellous appropriation of Nature's semblance which shows itself in Titian's later pictures, was not acquired without expenditure of time and trouble, and certainly not without fluctuations; and it is not without interest to look back for a moment and trace the relative positions of the master and his fellow painters in Northern Italy.

It was said early, and has often been repeated, that Titian's contemporaries were unacquainted with Correggio, from which we might infer that Titian himself was ignorant of the genius of Allegri. There is reason to doubt the correctness of this judgment. At one period of his career Titian produced pictures which remind us of Correggio. We remember the dazzling radiance, the playful character of the infant Christ in the "Virgin and Child" at Ancona. The very substance of Correggio's pigments meets us again in the "Madonna" of San Niccolò de' Frari at the Vatican, where the Virgin looks down from heaven with all the grace, and some share of the delightful affectation, of Allegri. Even the colour recalls the master of Parma by its silver sheen and softness of blending. In both painters the same chords appear to vibrate; Correggio's with a sensitive and almost feminine delicacy, Titian's with more manly power. Whilst Titian remains master of

* G. B. Armenini, De' veri precetti della pittura, 8vo, Ven. 1678, p. 113.

himself, and all but completely within the limits of the natural, Correggio allows himself to be carried away, and to succumb to that excess and exaggerated emphasis of tenderness which the Italians call by the untranslateable name of *smorfia*. Correggio again treats all surfaces—flesh, clouds, and vestments—alike, whilst Titian is diverse and subtle in his definition of them. Correggio for this reason is conventional, in spite of his grandeur, and leaves the higher ground of ennobled reality, in all its majesty, to his rival. That coincidence of style may occur in the works of contemporary artists is not to be denied, but they are not always casual or accidental. It may be chance, or the reverse, that strikes us here, but let us mark the curious facts. Titian and Correggio married about the same time—Correggio certainly in 1520. Both christened their eldest born sons with the same name of Pomponio. Titian and Correggio were equally well known to the Gonzagas of Mantua and the Gambaras of Correggio. At Correggio there lived Alfonso d'Avalos, one of Titian's most constant patrons, who asked the painter to visit him there in 1531.* Titian's "Madonnas" of Ancona and San Niccolò de' Frari, were produced at the very time when Allegri finished the cupola of San Giovanni, and began the cupola of the cathedral at Parma. Boschini speaks of a cupola completed at Parma by Allegri. He describes Titian's admiration of it, and

* See for the relations of Veronica Gambara and the Gonzagas to Correggio, Julius Meyer's Life of Allegri, 8vo, Leipzig, 1871, pp. 229–32. See further, Del Vasto to Aretino Correggio, Nov. 2, 1531, in Lett. a M. P. Aretino, p. 109.

notes the consequence. The people were at first indifferent, but hearing of Titian's favourable criticism, they began to sympathise, and Correggio's position was greatly improved.* All this would point to an early acquaintance between the two artists, without excluding that Titian later in the century, and during his frequent visits to Bologna, might have seen and admired the works of Correggio. That Titian met Correggio at Parma in 1530—a theory set up by writers of this and the last century—is less impossible than improbable, since Allegri left Parma in that very year to settle finally in his native place. But when Titian was sent to Bologna in 1531 by the Duke of Mantua, when he visited the same city in 1532 and 1543, he had ample opportunity to examine and to praise the frescoes of Parma, and there is every reason on this account for believing that his alleged ignorance of one of the greatest of his contemporaries is ill founded.†

Had not chance or some serious cause produced a connection between these masters, we might conjecture that the fame of Correggio had been brought to the knowledge of the Venetians by Lorenzo Lotto. At a very early period this artist left Venice after studying with Palma Vecchio, and under the influence of the Lombard Mantegnesques, at whose head Bramantino stood, he slightly modified his style at

* Boschini, Carta del Navegar (1660), p. 16.

† The authors who assign to Titian's visit to Correggio at Parma the date of 1530, are Ticozzi (Vecelli, p. 104) and Sebastiano Resta, whose letter to Giuseppe and Leone Ghezzi (close of the 17th century) is in Bottari (*u. s.*, iii. 497).

Rome. In the Romagna his manner was altered to some extent by Francia's example. But later still he met Correggio, and he came to acquire all the habits which we observe in that master. In 1527 Lotto repaired to Venice, where he painted a portrait —for centuries assigned to Correggio—the portrait of Andrea Odoni, a rich and enthusiastic admirer of contemporary art in the North.* Neither Lotto nor Odoni remained unknown to the triumvirate.† We shall see that Lotto lived on terms of friendship with Titian and Aretino, and it is impossible not to believe that if Titian till then had known nothing of Correggio, his ignorance would now at least have been completely dispelled. But it is hardly necessary to add that information conveyed to Titian in 1527 could not have influenced his art in 1520-23.

Lotto was one of the masters to whom Vasari referred when speaking of those who were crushed at Venice by Titian's superiority. He tried in 1529 to rival the great Venetian master by copying his style; but the "Charity of Sant' Antonino," which he executed for the Dominicans of San Giovanni e Paolo, shows plainly that he could not do more than imitate the solidity of Titian, and his attempt to compete was without serious consequences.

* Like the portrait of Odoni at Hampton Court, that of Aldrovandi in the Museum of Vienna is ascribed to Correggio; yet both are by Lotto.

† In a letter dated 1538, Aretino describes the treasures of art collected in Odoni's palace at Venice, part of which had been inherited fifteen years before from Francesco Zio. Compare Aretino to Odoni, Venice, Aug. 30, 1538, in Lett. d. M. P. Aretino and Cicogna, Isc. Ven. ii. 435.

In 1528, very shortly after Lotto settled at Venice, Palma Vecchio died. About the same time Sebastian del Piombo returned to Rome, and Pordenone withdrew to the provinces. The artists of the older generation who remained are easily divided into born Venetians or provincials, occasionally visiting or permanently residing in the capital. Of Moretto and Romanino Venice saw but little, as they carried the style of Titian and Palma to Brescia and the highlands north of it, and busied themselves much with fresco painting. Savoldo alone kept up a casual residence in the city of lagoons. In 1508 he paid for a matriculation in the guild of surgeons and grocers at Florence.* About 1533 he was called to Milan by Francesco Sforza, but he lived to a great old age without issuing from comparative obscurity, the public caring little for works which were a composite of styles derived from Titian, del Piombo, and the Brescians, and utterly regardless of the skill with which he executed certain classes of subjects, such as sunset scenes.† Boccaccino, who tried his fortune in vain at Rome, also endeavoured to transplant the style of the early Cremonese to Venice; but he made so slight a mark that the date of his visit is unknown. Girolamo da Treviso succeeded in finding a patron at Venice, and painted the whole of the Palace of Andrea Odoni about 1537; but he was very glad soon after to find employment under Henry the Eighth in England.

* Private communication, for which we have to thank Signor Gaetano Milanesi.

† See Paolo Pino's complaint (Dialogo, *u. s.*, p. 6) of the neglect of Savoldo by the Venetians.

Of native Venetians few are remembered, except those employed in the difficult and peculiar art of mosaic, which was taught and assiduously practised at Venice long after it fell out of use in other parts of Italy. But the mosaists formed a school of mechanical craftsmen, whose sole study it was to shade and colour objects designed by painters; and little, we should think, would be known even of Francesco and Valerio Zuccati, but that they were the sons of Sebastian, the first teacher of Titian, and dear to that master from feelings of old association. It was Titian chiefly who gave cartoons for the mosaics which these two brothers executed in San Marco. It was at Titian's request that Francesco stood godfather to one of his children.* Francesco's name clings to some monumental works of art, but is better known to the world from the fact that his portrait was frequently painted by Titian. Valerio is remembered less as a limner than as an actor in the public comedies of his day—and as the husband of Polonia, the best actress of her time at Venice.†

One artist, and one only who owed no instruction to Titian, made head against that master in the first half of the sixteenth century, and this was Bonifacio. He was a Veronese, and came apparently of a family in which painting was hereditary. But he earned his first laurels in Venice, where he combined the gay and brilliant scale of colours peculiar to his townsmen with the blanched but softly modelled flesh of Palma

* See Zanetti, Pitt. Ven., *u. s.*, p. 746.

† Compare Sansovino, Ven. Descritta, *u. s.*, p. 450.

Vecchio. After the death of Palma, Bonifacio succeeded to a large and important practice, which he worked with comparative ease and great success by means of numerous assistants. His pictures were to be found in the sixteenth century, not only in guild halls and religious edifices and in the palaces of patricians, but in all the public offices of Venice. In "the Magistrato de' governatori dell' Entrate" he composed in 1530 the vast subject of Christ with saints and allegorical figures of the virtues, which still adorns the Academy of Venice, and more than a dozen canvases besides, in which it is impossible not to admire the skill and rapidity of his pencil. But Bonifacio was one of those artists from whom a man like Titian had nothing to fear. He was a quick-handed second rate, whose pictures were effective without being of the first class. He was an artist—we cannot doubt—who produced much because he produced briskly—who being once in fashion acted as a thorn in the side of the young generation of craftsmen, who could only hope to live by painting with equal skill, more rapidity, and for a lower price. It is probably due in part to Bonifacio's example that the younger generation of painters, at whose head Paris Bordone, Tintoretto, and Andrea Schiavone stood, were induced to flood the market with light and sketchy wares, which seriously injured the character of Venetian art. It was owing to these joint causes that art fell into discredit, and the position of its guildsmen became precarious. To them we must attribute the remarks of Paolo Pino, a pupil of

Savoldo, who, writing in 1548, declared that painting had ceased to be rewarded as of old, that artists aspired to be masters before they had ceased to be apprentices; that poverty and the sordid nature of wholesale purchasers prevented young men from devoting themselves to careful study, but forced them to large and worthless productions; and that it was a happy chance for a rising genius to get commissions for chairs and chests.*

Titian for his part had given an impulse to quick painting by the wonderful ease and rapidity of his execution. That Aretino could boast in a letter to Paul Manutius that Titian could throw off a likeness as quickly as another could scratch the ornament on a chest, is evidence of the tendency which characterised all art, high and low.† But the young men forgot that Titian began as a patient, painstaking, and minute draughtsman; and that he was privileged by years of hard work to take liberties for which his pupils had no similar excuse.

So long as a man of Titian's power continued to produce pictures in which technical facility was concealed under faultless finish, young and rising artists might appear to have had an incentive to follow his example; Paris Bordone, amongst others, began in this form. But in his masterpiece of the fisherman presenting the ring to the Doge, Paris already displayed the tendency to sweeping execution, which now began to characterise all art at Venice; and he

* Pino, Dialogo, *u. s.*, p. 32.
† Aretino to Paul Manutius, Venice, Nov. 9, 1537, in Lett. di M. P. Aretino, i. 236.

soon fell into a lax and affected style, which combined the worst features of portrait allegory with the crudest contrasts of colour and costume. As a portrait painter, he competed with Titian for some considerable time, but he never gained a footing similar to that of Bonifacio at Venice; and at the very time when Girolamo da Treviso was induced to wander to the distant shores of Britain, Paris started for the not less distant capital of France. The new generation which now came into play was composed of young and clever men, who came out under the rival influences of Bonifacio and Titian. The first taught Giacomo Bassano, the second gave instruction to Tintoretto and employed Schiavone. It is curious to observe that jealousy and dislike of their pupils is supposed to have characterised both masters. Bassano, it was said, watched Bonifacio through the key-hole. When he left Venice, in 1530, to settle at Bassano, he carried with him all the prominent features of Bonifacio's style. Tintoretto was born in 1518.* It was rumoured that he left the school-workshop because his skill excited Titian's envy. But Tintoretto was a mere student when Titian verged on 60, and the story hardly deserves to be treated seriously. It is much more likely that Tintoretto tired of the

* It is commonly asserted that Tintoretto was born in 1512; but the register of San Marciliano at Venice contains the following entry: 31 Maio, 1594—morto mes. Jacomo Robusti detto Tentoretto de eta de anni 75, e m[esi] 8, ammalato giorni quindese da frieve. See Zabeo (Gio. Prosdocimo), Elogio in Discorsi letti nella, I. R. Accad. di Ven. 8vo, 1815, p. 58. Tintoretto's birthday would thus be Sept. 29, 1518.

restraint of learning, and took wing when hardly fledged to labour on his own account. Being the son of a silk-dyer, who could well support him, he would easily pass through the days of probation, in which he strove to learn the art of fresco, which Titian's atelier could not impart to him, and he had ample opportunity—being free from the bonds of apprenticeship—to exert his peculiar powers on the scaffoldings of the numerous palaces erected in these years by Venetian patricians. But when he took to this line of the craft, he became the competitor of Pordenone, not the rival of Titian or Bonifacio.

Schiavone or Medola, as records teach us to call him, was older by some years than Tintoretto, and a native of Sebenico, in Dalmatia.* Thrown entirely on his own resources when first landed on the quays of Venice, he had a more serious struggle with fortune than Tintoretto. But he learnt with singular perseverance to draw from the prints of Parmegianino, and to paint from the pictures of Titian and Giorgione. He earned his first pittance as a decorator of chests from a dealer named Rocco, who paid him at the rate of 24 soldi per diem. But he also became ambitious of acquiring the trick of fresco, and hired his services to the builders who contracted for the decoration of Venetian palaces. In this sort of labour, and probably as an assistant of Titian, he

* According to the version of Ridolfi, which has never been subjected to revision, Andrea Schiavone was born in 1522. But this must be an error. There is a fine portrait at the Pitti in his best style, dated 1537 (No. 69), and Vasari employed him to paint a large canvas in 1540 (Vas. xii. 340).

spent many years obscurely, and it was long before he exercised an influence on the art of his country.

Of one painter, whose power was exerted persistently and cleverly in competition with all the Venetians of the period, much might now be said. But Pordenone's rivalry forms part of the story of the life of Titian in 1537, and as such, requires to be treated separately.

APPENDIX.

VENICE, 1519—26.

1519. 28 Aprile, in Ven[a] Ricevo io Ticiano depentor de la S. di Monsignor Vesc[o] di Baffo da Cà da Pesaro duc. 10 per parte di una pala, che io ho a far a sua S. in la gesia de li Frati minori.

1519. Adì 12 Giugno, ricevei dal mō Signor sopradito duc. 10 a conto ut supra.

— Adì 23 Septembrio ricevi dal mō Sig[r] sopra d[o] Duc. 15 per conto ut supra.

It. adì deto ricevj da sua S. per il Telaro di legno, per tela, per fatura di dito telaro Duc sie (6), et io Ticiā o scripto.

It. adì 13 April 1522 ricevi io Ticiano sopradito qui in cassa mia da el soprad[o] Remō mōsignore duc. diexe a lire sie e soldi 4.

It. adì 5 Majo 1522. Ric. io Ticiano dal soprad[o] duc. 10 a L. 6 sol. 4.

— Adì 9 Septembrio contadi da el Rmō mōsignor duc. diexe—

1525, adì 20 Zugno. Rvj io Tician sopradito duc. quindese.

Adì 30 April 1526. Contadi ut supra da el Rmō mō S. duc. 16.

1526, adì 27 Magio. Rvj io Ticiano soprascripto el compito pagamento della Palla.

(Copied from the original in possession of the patrician family of Pesaro.)

[*Unpublished.*] 1523 25 Gennajo.

GIAMBATTISTA MALATESTA AL MARCHESE FEDERICO GONZAGA.

El latore presente è M[ro] Ticiano excellentissimo nell' arte sua et anche modesto, et gentil persona in ogni cosa; qual ha postposta molte sue opere di momento per venir abasciar la mano a V. E. secondo che lei s' e degnata farlo ricercare per me; unde non mi pare altrimenti raccomandarla a quella.

VENETIIS, die XXV Januarii, MDXXIII.

(Copied from the Mantuan Archives by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*] 1523, 11 Agosto.

BRAGHINO AL MARCHESE FEDERICO GONZAGA.

Io ho dato il giupone al M^ro^ Tuciano, presenti molti grandi homini, qual gh' è stato molto grato, e non pensa se non col proprio sangue gratificarla et cosi senza fine basa le mani a V. S. Circa al ritrato, qual e cusi bello el dice che per tutti "li modi" del mondo el vol farli fare un bello adornamento et puoi mandarlo subito.

VENECIA, ali xi Agosto, 1523.

(Copied from the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*] 1523, 14 Agosto.

IL BRAGHINO AL MARCH. FEDERICO GONZAGA.

Per che l' altra mia ch' i' ô scripto a V. S. Ill. Signor Mio Ex^mo^ non nominai ch' io li mandassi il quadro di M^ro^ Tutiano, ne di che modo ho fatto averlo, per questa mi par tocarli una parola, accio che mai da quella ne potesse avere imputacione alcuna. Sapii V. S. Ill. che in nome di quella, mi ho fatto una litera directiva a mi come potra vedere V. S. per la qui aligata, però con consenso del Sig. ambasciatore, qual mi la sugilō del sugillo di V. E. et a posta lo andai a trovare et li lesse la litera, dove in verità el non si fece pregare se non subito lo acconciō di quel modo che seco che agustera pol aver visto V. S. e me lo dette con molte altre oferte appresso.

VENETIIS, 14 Augusti, 1523.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*] 15 Agosto, 1523.

IL MARCHESE FEDERICO GONZAGA A GIAMBATTISTA MALATESTA.

Havemo havuto il quadro che ve ha mandato M^ro^ Tutiano che n' e molto piaciuto.

MANTUE, 15 Augusti, 1523.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*]

1525. APPOINTMENT OF GREGORIO VECELLI TO THE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR OF MINES.

Andrea Gritti, Doge, etc., a Tomaso Donato Cap^o^ di Cadore. Avendo il Nob. nrō Bernardo Balbi et^o^ a Podestà e Cap. di Feltre comunicata la Patente data da Bern^o^ de Marconi Vic^o^ Generale delle miniere del 19 andante al fedelis^mo^ nrō Gregorio q. Conte di *Ser* Vecello di Pieve di

Cadore, con elegarlo in Pro. vicario minerale in Cadore in luoco del fedelmo Matteo Soldano ora deputato da esso N. V. Balbi cancell. a Feltre, e desiderando esso Podestà che tale patente sii confermata, acciò egli possa assumere con migliore effetto l'uffizio della cancella, con li Capi del Cons. nrō di X. confermiamo la Patente sua in omnibus, et cosi commetiamo, che quelle abbiate ad osservare ed eseguire, onde liberato esso Soldan possi andare a servire a Feltre do N. V. giusta il desiderio dell' uno e dell' altro. Et cosi eseguirete, facendo correr la paga al do Soldan di tempo in tempo giusta la lettera nostra del 13 Aprile, 1503. Et et registratas presentanti restituite.

Dat. in Nrō Dm. Palato die 24 Aplis, Indc XIII. 1525.

[*Unpublished.*] 1527, 22 Giugno.

TIZIANO VECELLIO AL MARCHESE FEDERICO GONZAGA.

EXMO SIGNORE: Sapendo quanto V. E. ami la pittura et quanto la esalti, come si po vedere nei meriti de Mess. Julio Romano, et perche sempre desiderai di piacervi, essendo qui venuto Mess. Po Aretino, anzi San Pauolo in predicare le laude di V. E. l'ho ritratto, e perchè so ch' amate un tanto servitore per tante sue vertū ve ne faccio un presente.

Apresso havendo io la bona memoria del Sr Girolamo Adorno, il quale adorava il Marchese di Mantova, et perchè fu qualificato gentilhomo, di quello anchora seti presentato, et benchè non sieno doni da un tanto signore, ne di maestro troppo sufficiente, acceptate la fede di Tutiano et tenetegli finche secondo la qualità del mio ingegno vi mandarò una cosa che forse vi satisfarà, cosi degnate acceptarli per vostra cortesia, ricordandosi che sempre gli fui e son servitore et a V. E. baso le mani.

De VENETIA, á xxii de Giugno, MDXXVII.

Devmo Sre TITIANO VECELLIO.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua, by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*] 1527, 8 Luglio.

IL MARCHESE FEDERICO GONZAGA A PIETRO ARETINO.

Ho havuto li duo bellissimi quadri del Tuciano, che mi havete mandati per il servitor vostro, li quali mi sono sta molto cari sì per il desiderio ch' io haveva di havere un' opera fatta di così dotte mani, come sono quelle de lo excellente pte Tuciano, come anche per rappresentarsi in uno di essi quadri la effigie di cosi detto huomo come seti voi, et nell' altro potendo io contemplare la imagine d'una persona tanto amata da me quanto era il sig. Hieronimo Adorno. Sareti adunque contenti di ringratiar summamente in nome mio esso Tuciano, facendo intendere

che in breve li farò conoscere quanto mi sia stata grata una tanta dimostrazione.

Da MANTOVA, alli viii di Julio, 1527.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*] 1527, 8 Luglio.

IL MARCHESE FEDERICO GONZAGA A TIZIANO VECELLIO.

M. TUCIANO: ho ricevuto li due bellissimi quadri che vi è piaciuto mandarmi a donare, li quali veramente mi sono sta gratissimi, si perchè desideravo molto havere qualche opera delle dottissime man'vostre, per saper io quanto seti eccellente nell' arte della pittura, come anche per havermi voi mandato li ritratti de quelle due persone che mi haveti mandati, che mi furono sempre et sono carissime, oltra che sono anche tanto naturali che da la natura in fuori non è possibile che d'alcuno potessero essere sta facti meglio di quello che sono sta fatti da voi. Per il che sommamente ve ne ringratio, et per amor vostro li tenero molto cari. Certificandovi che di questa non mi haveresti potuto fare cosa che mi fosse stata più grata, et de' che vi ne havressi maggior obligo. Così dove potrò farvi piacere alcuno sarō sempre per farlo voluntieri e a tutti i commodi vostri mi offero non meno disposto che apparecchiato sempre.

Da MANTOVA, alli viii di Julio, 1527.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*] 1527, 11 Ottobre.

IL MARCHESE FEDERICO GONZAGA A PIETRO ARETINO.

Circa il Tuciano io non mancarò di fargli in breve qualche demonstratione, de sorte che potra conoscere in quanto bon conto io lo tengo et quanto mi è grato.

Da MANTOVA, alli xi di Ottobre, 1527.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

TITIAN TO THE MARQUESS OF MANTUA.

All' Illustriss. ed Eccellentiss. Signor mio osservandiss.
Il Signor Marchese Di Mantova.

ILLUSTRISSIMO ED ECCELLENTISSIMO SIGNOR MIO,—Mi pareria far troppo contra il mio debito, ed esser ingrato dell' infinito obligo che ho con V. Ecc., s' io lasciassi passar molti giorno ch' io non facessi riverenza a

quella con mie lettere, quando non la posso fare presenzialmente: non ho voluto più differire; cosi con questa fo riverenza a V. Illustriss. Signoria, e la prego che non si scordi quanto io le sono servitore, e sia certa che nessuno desiderio ho maggiore che di servirla, ed ogni ora mi pare un anno di esser a Venezia, che sarà passando dimane, a Dio piacendo, per poter satisfar a quanto sono obligato a V. Ecc., alla buona grazia della quale sempre mi raccomando e totalmente mi sono donato.

A FERRARA, alli 12 Giugno, 1529.

Di V. Ecc.
Devotiss. Servitore,
TICIAN VECELLIO, p.*

* [This letter has been printed in "Lettere Inedite de alcuni illustre Italiani," 8vo, Milan, 1856. Per le nozze, Cavriani—Lucchesi—Palli, by Canon W. Braghirolli. But the scarcity of this pamphlet makes a reprint desirable.]

[*Unpublished.*]

1530, 27th April, Venice.

In Cristi Nomine Amen. Anno Nativitatis ejusdem millesimo quingentesimo trigesimo (1530), Indictione tertia die vero vigesimo septimo mensis Aprilis.

Cum ita sit prout a partibus infrascriptis expositum fuit realiter inter dominum Gastaldionem et confratres St. Petri Martyris in Eclesia Dominorum fratruum Minorum Joannis et Pauli Venetum ex una et Magistrum Titianum de Vecellis pictorem partibus ex altera diu tractatum et tandem conventum predictus Magister Titianus ipsi scholæ et confraternitate pingere et construere deberet quandam palam supra et ante Altare prefacti Martyris ponendam et erigendam quam construere et pingere dixit promisisse ac deinde pinxisse et construxisse, ac deinde ortæ fuerint diferentiæ et questiones inter prefactas partes occasione ipsius palæ quas dominus Jacobus de Pergo modernus Gastaldio dictæ scolæ ressicare et quietare cupiens, igitur in mei Notari publici et testium infrascriptorum presentia constitutus sponte convenit et promisit eidem Magistro Titiano ibi presenti et contentanti. ℞ in quantum prædictus Magister Titianus præfactam palam sibi domino Jacobo per totum diem Jovis proxime futuram videlicet crastina in Ecclesia predicta, det et effectualiter consignet expensis M̃ prefacte scholæ circa ejus delationem ipse Dominus Jacobus operabit ut eidem de mercede sua occasione ipsius palæ satisfiet. ℞ quod ipse Magister Titianus computatis legatis et promissionibus eidem scholæ ut dicitur factis a diversis personis habebit ducatos centum auri de libris sex et soldis quatuor parvorum pro ducato et id pluri quod a confratribus dictæ scholæ ex aliis exigi poterit quantumcunque fuerit totum sit ex constatatione ipsius Magistri Titiani de quo contentus sit et tacitus remanebit prout ita se tacitum et contentum esse voluit verum si quid obstiterit quo-

minus ipse magister Titianus satisfactionem ut supra assequeretur, tunc ipse Dominus Jacobus de Pergo obbligando se et heredes ac bona sua præsentia et futura promisit in specie sua eidem Magistro Titiano reficere et resercire usque ad integram sum̃am ducatorum centum auri hinc per totum mensem Maij proxime renuntiando omni exceptione remota sub refectione et emendatione omnium et singulorum damnorum expensarum et interesse quæ et quas ipse Magister Titianus creditor in judicio vel extra pro non habitis ipsis denarijs ut supra ex aliis consequendis vel eorum occasione pateret.

Actum Venetiis Rivo Althi ad cancellum mei notarii presentibus p. Matteo contento q^m^ Nicolai draperio et Magistro Baptista q^m^ Petri et Luchano incisore Caligarum testibus rogatis.

Seal

Ego Joannes Jacobus de Raspis q^m^ Domini Bartolomei Pubblicus Imperialis et Venetus Notarius præmissis interfui et ea rogatus scripsi et pubblicare ac tradidi in fidem ipsis signo mei notariatus apposito consueto.

(Copied from the original in possession of Dr. Gio. Carnieluti of Serravalle.)

[*Unpublished.*] 1530, 5 Febbraio.

GIACOMO MALATESTA AL MARCHESE FEDERICO GONZAGA.

Tuciano m' ha fatto vedere gli quadri che 'l fa per V. S. Quello di Nostra donna con S^ta^ Catherina et l' altro de le Donne nude sono in bonissimo termine. Quello di Nostra Donna promette darlo a V. E. al principio di quaressima, l' altro a Pasqua. Quello da le Donne del Bagno e solamente designato. L'altro de la persona de V. S. armata vi e fatto buona parte, et molto se gli recomanda.

Da VENEZIA, alli v febraio, 1530.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*] 1530, 3 Marzo.

TIZIANO VECELLIO AL MARCHESE FEDERICO GONZAGA.

ILMO ET EXMO S. E PADRONE MIO SINGULARISSIMO. Per una del signor Conte Nicola ho inteso del dono e presente si è dignata farmi, e cio per sua gratia e liberalità. Per il che gli riferisco continue e infinite gratie scrivendo questo gran obligo agli infiniti ho con V. E. pregandola. Volia anco esser contenta commettere a suoi officiali, quando sarà tempo ciò s'eseguisca senza più fastidir quella. Per ch' io facendo l'acquisto prometterò a tal tempo sodisfare al debito e non vorei puoi manchare dil debito e parola mia, scrivo anco al S^r^ Conte prefato circa ciò—quanto lei potrà da lui intendere.

Io harei hoggi mai fornito il suo quadro delle Donne nude, ma ho

tanta rogna che certo non mi posso muovere ; ben spero fra 15 giorni o mezza quaresima darlo a V. E. alla quale baciando la mano con tuto il core di continuo mi racomando.

Data dà VENETIA al 3 di Martio, MDXXX.

Di V. Ex.

Dev. S^{or} TICIANO PITTORE.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*] 1530, 8 Luglio.

IL DUCA FEDERICO GONZAGA A BENEDETTO AGNELLO.

Volemo che de quelli danari vi lasso maestro Zanino nostro, pagato che abbiate queli lassõ delli 400 ducati hebbe Spagnino, dati tutti li altri a Ticiano per conto de quella cosa che sapeti et datine aviso quanti dinari li mancheranno ad arrivare alla somma de cento Scudi che faremo provisione de qua de fargeli havere, perchè volemo che habbia cento scudi.

MANTUE, 8 Julii, 1530.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

F. BOLOGNA TO THE DUKE OF MANTUA.

Allo Illustrissimo Signor,
Duca Di Mantova.

ILLUSTRISSIMO SIGNORE,—Per una di V. Ecc. intesi come era intenzione di quella che io ritraessi la Cornelia. Io in vero era in letto ammalato, pur, al meglio che potei, vestitomi e montato a cavallo a casa della Signora Isabella me ne andai per dare principio all' opera, e vi trovai M. Tizian, il qual mi disse che V. Ecc. l'aveva mandato per fare quello che io era ito a voler fare, si ch' io non ricercai più oltre, solo lo pregai che facesse a V. Ecc. fede come ch' io aveva una massella enfiata, e che tutti li denti, come esso vide, mi si scossavano in bocca per rispetto di una umidità prespa in sul Tè. Mi è stato scritto V. Ecc. aver aouto a male, che mi partissi senza licenza, ma Dio sa se io avevoi intenzione di fare le tre feste in Mantova, ma io non posso ire contra il Cielo. Tanto è, se io vivo e che stia sano ho speranza che V. Ecc. si loderà della mia servitù, e come più tosto possa me ne verrò a Mantova ai servigi di V. Ill. S., alla quale riverente inchinandomi mi raccomando.

Di BOLOGNA, alli 11 Luglio, 1530.

IL BOLOGNA, servitore di V. Ill. S.

(Reprinted from Canon Braghirolli's Lettere inedite, *u. s.*)

TITIAN TO THE DUKE OF MANTUA.

All' Illustrissimo Signor,
Duca Di Mantova.

ILLUSTRISSIMO DUCA,—Questa donna, ovvero Cornelia, non si trova qui in Bologna. La Signora Isabella l' ha mandata a stare a Nivolara a mutar aria, per essere stata ammalata, e dicono, che la è alquanto smarrita per il male: pur la sta meglio. Ed io intendendo questo, ho dubitato di non far cosa buona, essendo stata ammalata, e poi io essendo vinto dal gran caldo, ed anche un poco dal male, e per non mi ammalare del tutto, non sono passato più oltre, pensando io di servir V. Ecc. di questa cosa benissimo, ed alla si troverà ben soddisfatta. Prima queste gentili madonne mi hanno tanto bene impresso delle sue fatezze, che ci ho ardire di farla di modo che ognuno che la conosca dirà che io l'abbia ritratta più volte, e di questo prego V. Ecc. che lasci l'incarico a me, perchè in termine di dieci giorni circa ve la farò vedere, mandandomi a Venezia quel ritratto che fece quell' altro pittore della detta Cornelia, ed io ve li rimanderò tutti due indietro, el la Ecc. V. conoscerà al paragone come desidero servirla in questo ed in ogni altra cosa finchè avrò vita. Visto V. Ecc. il rittrato, quando sarà fatto, se gli mancherà qualche cosa, io verrò di grazia a Nivolara a raccozzarlo, ma credo non farà bisogno. Ed a V. Ecc. bacia la mano.

A BOLOGNA, alli 12 Luglio, 1530.

Di V. Ecc.
Servitor TICIAN V.

(Reprinted from Canon Braghirolli's Lettere Inedite, *u. s.*)

[*Unpublished.*] 1530, 15 Luglio.

BENEDETTO AGNELLO AL DUCA FEDERICO GONZAGA.

Ho dato li 78 scuti e meggio a M^ro^ Tuciano, qual è arrivato qui mezzo amalato, ne ringratia infinitamente la E. V. et molto se li raccomando.

Da VENETIA, alli XV di Julio, 1530.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*]

Death of Titian's Wife.

BENEDETTO AGNELLO TO JACOMO CALANDRA.

Magnifico patron mio honorandissimo, l' ambassator di Ferrara m' ha detto haver inteso da bon loco chel Signor Duca di Milano tiene pratica di far confederation con Svizeri et chel dubita che queste sue pratiche in le quali tutte mostra diffidentia del Imperatore, al fine non siano

causa de la ruina sua, et subiunse poi, che anche ne la pratica del matrimonio che si tratta tra lui senza partecipatione del Imperatore, come se Madama di Monferrato fosse per maritare la figliola senza il consenso di sua Maestà.

Il nostro Maestro Tiziano è tutto sconsolato per la morte di sua moglie che fu sepelita hieri, lui m' ha detto che per il travaglio in che l'e stato per la infermità di detta sua moglie, non ha potuto lavorar al rettratto de la Signora Cornelia ne al quadro delle nude, chel fa per il nostro Illustrissimo Signore, qual serà una bella cosa, et crede di haverlo fornito per tutto il presente mese. Esso Maestro Ticiano desideraria sapper come il S^r^ nostro è restato ben satisfatto del S. Sebastiano, che li ha mandato ben chel dica che sia cosa da donzena, al respetto de laltro dono chel farà del quadro de le nude, et che solamente lo ha donato per uno intertenimento, et per segno della servitù chel porta a sua Excellentia. A vostra Signoria me racomando.

Da VENETIA, alli vi di Agosto, 1530.

Servitor BENEDETTO AGNELLO.

A tergo (Al Magnifico Messere Jo. Jacomo Calandra, Ducal Secretario et Castellano di Mantua).

[Mantua, Archivio Ducale, Filza E. XLV. 3.]

(This letter, favoured by Rawdon Brown, Esq., was published in part by Pungileoni in the Giornale Arcadico for Aug. 1831, but ascribed erroneously to Titian, the writer being the envoy of Mantua at Venice.)

[*Unpublished.*] 1530, 26 Settembre.

IL DUCA FEDERICO GONZAGA A SIGISMONDO DELLA TORRE.

Hoggi si è partito di qua il mulatiere de M. Antonio Bagarotti con le arme che mandamo a Don Petro de la Cavena et il retratto de la Cornelia del Sior Commendador Maior.

MANTUE, 26 Septembris, 1530.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*] 1530, 27 Settembre.

BENEDETTO AGNELLO A JO. JACOMO CALANDRA.

Sono alcuni dì che non ho visto M. Titiano, ma per quanto intendo non è anchor ben sanato et essendo andato l' altro dì a visitarlo me disse che a farlo guarire presto bisognarebbe che li venisse nova che l' Signor nostro li havesse dato il possesso del beneficio di Medule, perchè si allegrarebbe tutto, che la indispositione sua è causata da humor melanconico.

VENETIA, 27 Settembre, 1530.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*] 1530, 4 Ottobre.

BENEDETTO AGNELLO A JO. JACOMO CALANDRA.

M. Titiano comincia a farsi gagliardo et presto venira a Mantova. Lui hebbe la lettera del Signor Conte Niccola; ma perchè allora non era in termine de poter scrivere non lo diede risposta.

VENETIA, 4 Ottobre, 1530.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*] 1530, 24 Ottobre.

BENEDETTO AGNELLO AL DUCA FEDERICO GONZAGA.

M. Ticiano et il Sansuino fanno pratica di ritrovare il garzone che sappia fundere et subito che habbiano cosa al proposito me lo faranno sapere.

VENETIA, 24 Ottobre, 1530.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*] 1530, 30 Ottobre.

BENEDETTO AGNELLO AL DUCA FEDERICO GONZAGA.

M. Tiziano m' ha detto haver per li mani un gargione che sa fundere benissimo et che anche è assai bon scultore, il quale pensa che serà molto al proposito per V. E. et che volontieri venirà al servitio di quella. Subito che 'l gli habbi parlato ne farà resposta; et io ne avisarò V. S. Ill.

VENETIA, 30 Ottobre, 1530.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*] 1531, 11 Marzo.

BENEDETTO AGNELLO AL DUCA FEDERICO GONZAGA.

Ho dato la sua lettera a M^ro^ Ticiano, qual per il desiderio grande che l' ha di servire a V. E. anchor che 'l si retrove alquanto indisposto ha gia fatto far la Tavola per far la S^ta^ Maria Magdalena, et credo che hoggi darà principio a lavorarvi, nè gli mancarà d' ogni diligentia per far una cosa excellente de la quale V. E. ne possi restar soddisfatta. Esso M. Ticiano dice voler fare la detta S^ta^ M^a^ Magdalena differente da quella che l' ha principiato, et che 'l mostrò a M. Vincenzo veneziano per far una cosa più bella, anchor ch' io credo che l' haveria da far assai

a poterla migliorare, perchè in effetto quella che l' ha comincio, da quelli che hanno cognitione di pictura è reputata cosa excellentissima.

Da VENETIA, alli xi Marzo, 1531.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*] 1531, 11 Marzo.

IL DUCA FEDERICO GONZAGA ALLA MARCHESA DI PESCARA.

Ho inteso dal S^r^ Fabritio Maramaldo, quale me ha detto che ella desidera di avere una pittura bella, et di mano di pittore eccellente d' una figura de S^ta^ Maddalena. Ho subito mandato a Venetia e scritto a Titiano, quale e forse il più eccellente in quell' arte, che a nostri tempi si ritrovi, ed è tutto mio, ricercandolo con grande instantia a volerne fare una bellissima lagrimosa più che si puõ e farmela haver presto.

MANTUA, alli xi de Marzo, 1531.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*] 1531, 18 Marzo.

BENEDETTO AGNELLO AL DUCA FEDERICO GONZAGA.

M. Ticiano ha dato principio alla S^ta^ Maddalena, et dice che si sforzarà di fornirla quanto più presto serà possibile.

VENETIA, 18 Marzo, 1531.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*] 1531, 19 Marzo.

IL DUCA FEDERICO GONZAGA A BENEDETTO AGNELLO.

Ne piace che maestro Tutiano habbia principiato la S^ta^ Maddalena, la quale comè più presto l' habbiamo tanto più mi sera grata.

MANTUE, 19 Martii, 1531.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*] 1531, 22 Marzo.

BENEDETTO AGNELLO AL DUCA FEDERICO GONZAGA.

M. Titiano lavora gagliardamente drieto la S^ta^ Magdalena, la quale è

già in termine che la si può far vedere ad ogni eccellente pictore; et V. E. sii certa che serà cosa molto degna et di summa excellentia.

VENETIA, alli xxii de Marzo, 1531.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*] 1531, 12 Aprile.

BENEDETTO AGNELLO AL DUCA FEDERICO GONZAGA.

Mando la S^ta^ Magdalena, la quale M. Ticiano ha tenuto ne le mani questi dui dì de più contra la promissa che haveva fatto per darli la vernice, ma il tempo l' ha impedito, che per non esser stato il sole ben chiaro non l' ha potuta invernigiare ben a suo modo, pur dice che, così come la sta la si può mandare in ogni loco, affirmando che V. E. non ha havuto cosa alcuna delle sue che sii al paragone di questa et pensa che V. S. ne restera ben satisfacta.

Da VENETIA, xii Aprile, 1531.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*] 1531, 14 Aprile.

BENEDETTO AGNELLO AL DUCA FEDERICO GONZAGA.

Non mandai la S^ta^ Magdalena, si come scrissi alla E. V. perchè essendo stata invernigiata di fresco M. Titiano dubitava che la non si guastasse: hora che l' è ben secca la mando.

Da VENETIA, 14 Aprile, 1531.

(Copied from the originals in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*]

TITIAN TO THE DUKE OF MANTUA.

1531, 31 Luglio.

ILLMO ET EXMO SIGR SR MIO,

Cum quanta allegrezza et jubilo del animo habbi recevuto le humanissime lettere che V. Ex^ia^ per sua bontà se ha degnato scrivermi, non lo potria exprimer ne cum parole ne cum scrittura, percioché quello che de fuori via havea inteso de le felicissime sue nozze per le lettere de V. Ex^ia^ ne son fatto chiaro, dilche come sviscerato servitore che li son me ne son tanto allegrato che non capisco in me medesmo, et prego il nostro Sig^r^ Idio la conservi et faci felice et adempi li desiderij sui per infiniti anni.

Ill^mo^ Sig^r^ mio questi mesi passati io scrisse a Mes^r^ Vicenzo venetiano

circa il beneficio de Medole, dal qual non havendo mai havuto risposta, et forsi per le molte occupation sue mi parse prender quel partito de scriver alla Ex^ma V. non perch' io m'ai mi diffidassi del animo de quella, ma solum per aricordarli la servitu mia, al presente vedendo quanto la mi scrive de le bolle del ditto beneficio et de lentrate de quello, cum le genocchia in terra humil^te li baso le mani, et ge ne rendo infinite gratie, et pensando che non accordi gli offerisca la servitu mia, perche e sua gia molti et molti anni la supplico solum, che parendoli di adoperarla sempre la mi trovara paratissimo alli commandamenti soi et in la sua buona gratia humil^te me raccomando, adi ultimo luio MDXXXI.

De V. Ill^ma Sig^ia.

Humil Ser^re et Schiavo TICIAN VECELLIO.

Al Ill^mo et Ex^mo S^r mio il Sig^r Duca de Mantua.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*] 1531, 7 Settembre.

BENEDETTO AGNELLO AL DUCA FEDERICO GONZAGA.

Io ho dato le bolle a M. Titiano quagli hanno reso quella allegrezza che più si possa dire maggiore, et cossi fattogli instantia delli quadri di V. E. che ha promisso, come debitore, de dargli subita expeditione.

Da VENETIA, alli vii di Settembre, 1531.

(Copied from the originals in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*]

TITIAN TO THE DUKE OF MANTUA.

1531, 29 Ottobre, Venezia.

ILL^MO ET EX^MO SIG^R ET HON^MO SUA SINGUL^MO.

Hyeri essendomi stato presentato una de V. Ex^ia qual mi comandava alcune cose per bisogno del Sig^r Marchese de Monferrato, et prima letta cum quella riverenza a me debita subito con ogni dilligentia non obstante che mi fosse presentato doi giorni festivi che non se habbi anco ritrovar parte de dette robbe, mi son sforzato suplire in parte al debito mio, et cossi per il presente cavallaro le mando salvo che il colore spalto, et una coppa d'oro et le doi de argento, qual per non si havere potuto macinare, et importando la cellerità, mi e parso expedire dicto cavallaro cum quiste che si sono havute, riservando mandar le altre per il primo. Humil^te baso la mane de V. Ex^ia rac^mi in sua bona gratia.

Di VINEGGIA, alli xxviiij de Ottub. 1531.

De V. Ill^ma et Ex^ma Sig^ia,

Humillim^o Ser^re TICIANO VECELLIO.

Allo Ill^mo et Excel^mo Sig^r il S^r Duca de Mantoa.

(Copied by Canon Braghirolli in the Archives of Mantua.)

[*Unpublished.*] 1531, 30 Novembre.

Benedetto Agnello a Gio. Jac. Calandra.

M. Ticiano . . . al presente lavora continuamente su tre quadri da portare a Mantova due per il S^r Nostro, l'altro per Ill. S^ta Duchessa.

Da Venetia, alli 30 de Novembre, 1531.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*]

Votive Picture of Doge Gritti.

Marino Sanuto, Diarii, vol. lv. pp. 9-10, 6 Ottobre, 1531.

"Io vidi in colegio il *quaro* novo posto con la persona et effigie di questo serenissimo qualse in Zenochio davanti una nostra dona col puttin in brazo et San Marco lo apresenta e da drio la nostra dona e tre santi San Bernardin S. Alvise et S. Marina et e sta comentado che tra questi tre santi vese diferentia chi dil horo l' havea fato doxe. S. Bernardin diseva fo eletto nel mio Zorno. Santa Marina diseva esta electo per haver recupera Padoa nel mio Zorno adì 17 di luio. Santo Alvise diseva et io son il nome di q. Alvise Pisani proc^r suo consolo qual era nel 41 et lui fo causa di farlo doze unde San Marco visto questa diferentia tra li tre santi par lo apresenti ala nostra dona e il fiol per terminar qual di lhoro esta causa di la elettione al ducato di soa serenita e bel quadro fatto per Tuciano pittor et esta bello il commento fatto dil qual ne ho voluto far memoria."

Copied by C. A. Cicogna.

MS. Note to Titianello's Anonymous Life of Vecelli, ed. of 1809.

[*Unpublished.*] 1532, 6 Giugno.

Benedetto Agnello al Duca Federico Gonzaga.

Suso le galee tornate de Alexandria è venuto uno animale molto strano, nè mai più visto in queste bande. Fin hora non l' ho potuto vedere, et anche per la relazione che ne ho havuto non mi basta l'animo de scriver come el sii fatto. Messer Ticiano m' ha promisso di farne un retratto, qual mandarò a V. E. subito che 'l sia fornito.

Venetia, 6 di Giugno, 1532.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*] 1532, 8 Giugno.

Benedetto Agnello al Duca Federico Gonzaga.

Ho visto quello animale strano, del quale scrissi alla S. V. La persona

sua è poco maggiore di quella d' un daino; ha la testa longa da caval o et cosi li occhi, il mostazzo de bove, li denti de cervo, e le corne de camozzo, ma un poco più grossette et grandette. Il resto de la persona sua mi assomiglia più al cervo che ad alcun altro animale, da la coda in fori che è suttile et longa circa un palmo con un spigolo de pelli sopra, il pelo suo e più chiaro di quello del cervo et trae al rosso.

VENETIA, alli 8 de Giugno, 1532.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*] 1532, 19 Giugno.

BENEDETTO AGNELLO AL DUCA FEDERICO GONZAGA.

M. Titiano ha fatto il retratto de lo animale nuovamente venuto de Alexandria et per la prima nave che venghi in suso lo manderò a la S. V.

VENETIA, 19 Giugno, 1532.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*] 1532, 22 Giugno.

IL DUCA FEDERICO GONZAGA A BENEDETTO AGNELLO.

Staremo aspettando il ritratto de quigli animali poi chè M. Titiano l'ha fornito e mi sarà caro haverlo.

MANTUE, xxii Junii, 1532.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*] 1532, 22 Giugno.

BENEDETTO AGNELLO AL DUCA FEDERICO GONZAGA.

Per il presente exhibitore, che serà Sirocco da Mantua, paron de nave, mando alla E. V. il retratto dell' animale di che le scrissi.

VENETIIS, 22 Giugno, 1532.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*] 1532, 29 Ottobre.

IL DUCA FEDERICO GONZAGA A TIZIANO VECELLIO.

Messer Ticiano amico, &c. Vi priego che mi mandate quì quel pittor

piacevole che sapeti per far qualche bel spettacolo alla Maestà Cesarea in alcune comedie che ho disegnato di fare alla venuta di quella che mi farete piacer grande.

MANTUE, 29 Octobris, 1532.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*] 1532, 7 Novembre.

IL DUCA FEDERICO GONZAGA A TIZIANO VECELLIO.

Messer Titiano: per che haverei molto caro che vi ritrovasti qui presso me de presente, vi prego quanto più posso che siati contento quanto più presto potrete di venire in qua che mi farete singularissimo piacere.

MANTUE, alli 7 di Novembre, 1532.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*] 1532, 8 Novembre.

TIZIANO VECELLIO AL DUCA FEDERICO GONZAGA.

ILLMO ET EX. SIGR DUCA,—Il Piacevole Pittore, richiesto dall' Ill. S. lator della presente, vien de lì per satisfare alla soa intentione, qual pittore e persona molto ottima et è a proposito di V. Ill. S. che credo certo assai li piacerà. Io per far cosa sia di contento alla Ex. V. S. m' ho sforzato di farlo venire, et cossi io ge lo mando, como anxioso ad ogni suo servitio, et All. Ill. S. V. mi racomando.

In VENEZIA alli 8 Novembrio, 1532.

D. V. Ill. S.
Servitore TICIANO VECELLIO.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*] 1533, 10 Marzo.

TIZIANO VECELLIO AL DUCA FEDERICO GONZAGA.

ILLMO ET ECCELLMO SIGR MIO OSSERMO,—Havendo io inteso V. Ecc. esser partita per la corte di L. Ces. Maestà ho pensato chel mio venir a Mantoa sarebbe stato soverchio, non ci essendo V. Eccția. Et così me n' andrò di lungo a Venetia, dolendomi della mia disgratia che non m' ha lassato partir da Bologna tanto in tempo che habbia potuto trovarla inanzi il partir suo per satisfare non meno al mio debito che al desiderio

di V. Eccᵗⁱᵃ. Hora io sarò a Venetia a ubidientia sua per far quanto ella si degnerà sempre comandarmi, et attenderò a fornire la copia del ritratto di S. Mᵗᵃ che porto meco a nome di V. Eccᵗⁱᵃ le cui mani basio et alla buona gratia della quale humilmente mi raccomando.

Di Bologna, il di x di Marzo, MDXXXIII.

Di V. E. Humil Sᵒʳ Titiano.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*] 1533, 12 Luglio.

Benedetto Agnello a Jo. Jacomo Calandra.

Perchè M. Ticiano si sente un poco male et non cognosse di potere venire a Mantova. Pero la S. V. lo potrà far intendere al Signor Nostro.

Venetia, xii Luglio, MDXXXIII.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*] 1534, 14 Febbrajo.

Benedetto Agnello a Jo. Jacomo Calandra.

M. Tician, qual e giunto qui in casa mia mi dice ha posto in ordine la tavola di far il quadro del Sigʳ Ferrante et che gli darà principio il primo dì di quaresima.

Venetia, 14 Febbraio, 1534.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*] 1534, 6 Marzo.

Isabella Estense Gonzaga a Benedetto Agnello.

Mᶜᵉ, Perche coloro che ci prestarono il ritratto di noi el qual ebbe Mess. Titiano per cavarne di lui uno simile ci fanno instantia grandissima che glielo restituiamo, volemo che voi ve lo faciate rendere et che per persona fidata et discreta la qual habbi ad havergli rispetto ce lo mandiate aconcio di sorta che non vi sia pericolo di guastarsi.

Mantue, vi Marzo, 1534.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*]

1534, 9 Maggio.

BENEDETTO AGNELLO A JO. JAC. CALANDRA.

Circa la nostra S^ta^ Magdalena non so più che me dire, se non che poteria essere che un giorno la se havesse, et l' animo mio è che M. Ticiano non possa mancare di darla.

Da VENETIA, alli 9 Maggio, 1534.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*]

1536, 30 Aprile.

BENEDETTO AGNELLO AL DUCA FEDERICO GONZAGA.

M. Ticiano dice che mi darà il ritratto de l' Imperator, che lo potrò mandare alla E. V. con la prima nave che venirà in suso. De la sua Venuta a Mantova promette che serà presta, ma per haver alcune occupationi non può per hora deliberare il di della partita, affirmando però che col primo cavallaro che verrà dopo questo darà avviso a V. E. quando la gli haverà da mandare il cocchio, del quale ne la ringratia.

VENETIA, ultimo d' Aprile, 1536.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*]

1536, 5 Maggio.

BENEDETTO AGNELLO ALLA MARCHESA ISABELLA GONZAGA.

Ticiano non è qui che gli dì passati se ne venne a Mantova et andò col S^r^ Duca alla Corte, col quale deve anche tornare a Mantova, dove V. E. lo vederà prima di me, et lei medesima gli potra parlar del retratto di Zurinelli et ordinarli glielo mandi subito serà giunto qui.

Da VENETIA, alli v di Maggio, 1536.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*]

1536, 10 Luglio.

GIANJACOPO CALANDRA A SIGISMONDO FRANZINO DALLA TORRE.

M. Ticiano dice che se ricordarà delle ritratti delli Imperatori promessi a S. E. de fare. Tutto farete intendere a S. E.

Di MANTOVA, lo x di Luglio, MDXXXVI.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*] 1537, 3 Aprile.

BENEDETTO AGNELLO A GIO. JACº CALANDRA.

Subito havuti che habbia le misure di quadri sollecitarò M. Ticiano che finisca le teste degli Imperatori che l' ha da fare per il Sigr nostro.

VENETIA, iii di Aprile, 1537.

(Copied from the original in the Archives of Mantua by Canon Braghirolli.)

[*Unpublished.*] 1537, 6 Aprile.

TIZIANO VECELLIO AL DUCA FEDERICO GONZAGA.

ILLMO ET ECCMO SOR MIO, SOR ET PATRON OBSERVMO,—

Non era de bisogno che V. E. col mezzo de sue lettere et del dono de la ricchissima casocca mi desse memoria de li suoi quadri; non gli potendo io haver più a core di quello me habbia, conoscendo molto bene in quanto obligo le sia per gli tanti beneficii. Ma poi che a lei è piaciuto di così voler fare, et pel favore et de la mercede fattami la ringratio quanto più posso, et le ne baso mille volte le mani. Gia sono più giorni die dì uno de li quadri all' ambasiatore, che lo mandasse a V. E. Dui altri ne ho in bon termine, gli quali finirò subito che intenda se il primo gli haverà satisfatto, o in qual parte non le sarà piaciuto, che mi farà regula a li altri, et de mano in mano seguirò senza intermissione di tempo fin tanto chi gli finisca tutti, e spero dover fare di sorte che V. E. resti di me servita, alla quale quanto prima fusse commodo de liberarmi il beneficio da la pensione la mi farebbe la maggior mercede et gratia del mondo a farlo, che oltre al danno che ne ho de li dinari, che pago ogni anno me ne segue ancho non poco fastidio et disturbo per causa de le persone con le quale io son impazzato, de le cui mani solo V. E. mi può liberare, et cio la prego et supplico quanto più efficacemente so et posso ad volerlo fare, che in vero non so qual cosa mi volesse se io mi trovasse senza questo intrico (*sic*) il quale essendomi levato di piedi da V. E. quando per tanti altri rispetti non gli fusse in quella maggiore obbligatione che possi essere servitore a signore et patron suo, questo solo bastarebbe per farmeli schiavo perpetuo, ne la cui bona gratia humilmente mi raccomando.

Di VENETIA, adì vi di Aprile, MDXXXVII.

Di V. E.

Humilº Servitore

TITIANO VECELLIO.

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